

THE
MORNING-LAND;

OR,

A THOUSAND AND ONE DAYS IN THE EAST.

BY FRIEDRICH BODENSTEDT.

FROM THE GERMAN.

BY RICHARD WADDINGTON.

Second Series.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

© RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1853.

CONTENTS

OF

THE SECOND VOLUME.

CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
CITY LIFE AND SCENERY.—A TARTAR DWELLING, AND AN ARMENIAN MARRIAGE IN TIFLIS	1

CHAPTER II.

SESSIONS IN THE DIVAN OF WISDOM.—AN ARABIAN PRAYER AND A TARTAR HYMN IN GLORIFICATION OF THE HOUSE OF THE “PADISHAH OF THE RUSSIANS, THE LORD OF THE WORLD, THE KING OF KINGS”	54
---	----

CHAPTER III.

THE WISE MAN OF GJANDSHA'S SECOND AND LAST LOVE.— CONCLUSION OF THE SONGS OF MIRZA-SHAFFY	68
ASKOLDOVA MOGILA (PENDANT AND CONCLUSION)	107
APPENDIX OF NOTES	261
EXCURSUS. BY THE TRANSLATOR	275

THE
MORNING-LAND;

OR,

A THOUSAND AND ONE DAYS IN THE EAST.

BY FRIEDRICH BODENSTEDT.

FROM THE GERMAN.

BY RICHARD WADDINGTON.

Second Series.

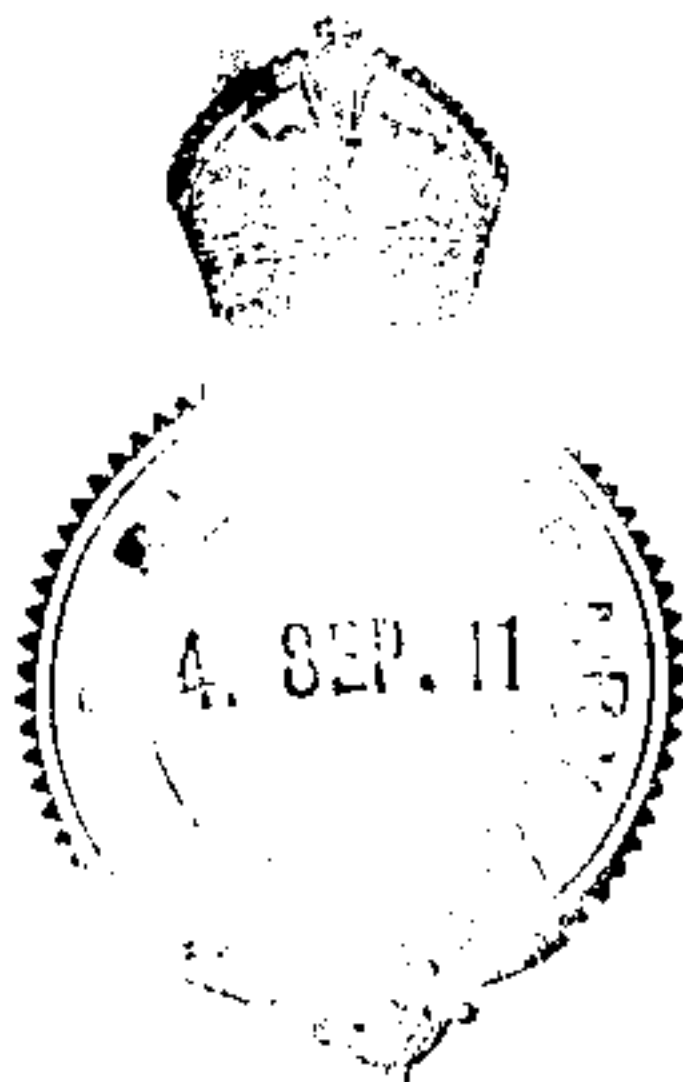
IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

© RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1853.



66 F1. (1)

LONDON: PRINTED BY WOODFALL AND KINDER.
ANGEL COURT, SKINNER STREET.

CONTENTS

OF

THE SECOND VOLUME.

CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
CITY LIFE AND SCENERY.—A TARTAR DWELLING, AND AN ARMENIAN MARRIAGE IN TIFLIS	1

CHAPTER II.

SESSIONS IN THE DIVAN OF WISDOM.—AN ARABIAN PRAYER AND A TARTAR HYMN IN GLORIFICATION OF THE HOUSE OF THE “PADISHAH OF THE RUSSIANS, THE LORD OF THE WORLD, THE KING OF KINGS”	54
---	----

CHAPTER III.

THE WISE MAN OF GJANDSHA'S SECOND AND LAST LOVE.— CONCLUSION OF THE SONGS OF MIRZA-SHAFFY	68
ASKOLDOVA MOGILA (PENDANT AND CONCLUSION)	107
APPENDIX OF NOTES	261
EXCURSUS. BY THE TRANSLATOR	275

THOUSAND AND ONE DAYS

IN

THE EAST.

CHAPTER I.

CITY-LIFE AND SCENERY.

A TARTAR DWELLING AND AN ARMENIAN MARRIAGE IN TIFLIS.

WITH all the respect that Mirza-Shaffy enjoyed among the Tartar and Persian literati, he was in the so-called "good society" of Tiflis entirely unknown. This "good society" consisted chiefly of the more distinguished militaires, and of the higher class of Russian functionaries, among whom were to be found a great number of Ger-

man, and several French and Spanish names. To these may be added innumerable princes and princesses of the old royal house of Georgia, and several wealthy Armenian and Georgian grandees, whose dress and mode of life had already acquired more or less of a European character.

At great dinners, balls, and similar extraordinary festivities, the Asiatic element was more strongly represented. There might be seen, in the most gorgeous apparel, and in the costliest armour, princes of the Kirghizes, Truchmenians, Kabardians, Abchazians, Gurians, Tushians, Mingrelians, Imerethians, Chans, Sultans, and Chieftains of various Tartar and Circassian tribes.

From the narrower circles of society these foreign elements were for the most part excluded. French was here the predominant language, and the black dress-coat, or the uniform, the predominant costume. The toilette, too, of the ladies perfectly corresponded with the strictest Parisian requirements. The few ladies in these circles who belonged to the princely families of Georgia,

such as the Tshavtshevadsés and the Gribojedov*, had, partly by residence at the Court of St. Petersburg, partly by foreign travel, so completely lived into the European manners and costume, that they could only be distinguished from the rest by their Oriental beauty.

The great mass of the Georgian, Armenian, Tartar, and Persian population, stood in about the same relation to the saloon-society of Tiflis, as, in the first months of the year, the Ghetto of Prague to the aristocracy there.

It was considered "*mauvais genre*" to visit the house of a family not recognised in the saloon-circle; and functionaries, as well as militaires, with a few genial exceptions, yielded to the prevailing prejudice. As, however, in the Tiflisian saloons, little more was to be seen of Asiatic life than in any saloon of Paris, Vienna, or Berlin, I sought the Asiatic *mauvais genre* as often as the opportunity presented itself.

* Madame von Gribojedov—the widow of the famous Russian comic poet Gribojedov, who, as ambassador to the Persian Court, was slain in the year 1829, in a popular insurrection at Teheran.

A social life, in our sense of the word, is unknown among the Asiatics; the women being for the most part strictly separated from the men, and social meetings in general only taking place on special occasions, at marriages, baptisms, &c.

The nature of such separate female meetings a stranger of course can only learn by hearsay, or through circumstances exceptionally and accidentally favourable.

I resided at the foot of St. David's Mountain (that which bears the miraculous chapel), in the adjoining building to a house which the rich Armenian merchant Tamamshev had fitted up expressly for himself, and the family of his son-in-law, the prince Tumanov.

From the balcony, as well as from the terrace, of my dwelling, where, in fine weather, I smoked my tshibuq every morning and evening, I could survey at ease the whole city as it lay beneath me to the right. To the left, the eye rested on the sacred mountain, which, every Thursday, with the long train of lovely pilgrimesses winding up to the chapel, afforded a most charming spec-

tacle. Hard by my dwelling, at the foot of the mountain, lay some half-subterranean saklis, whence, now and then, a slender Georgian maiden emerged, to sit upon the roof of her own dark stone-hut, or to visit a female friend on a neighbouring roof. The house of Tamamshev stood exactly opposite to mine, and over the not very wide court-yard I could pretty well see, especially in the evening, when all was lighted up, what was going on in the women's apartments.

There, on every festal occasion, sat from thirty to forty Armenian females, with crossed legs, on a carpet covering the whole room, in picturesque circle, all attired in heavy costly stuffs, the neck behind overflowed by a white veil, and the boddice, in the form of a double-crescent, cut out so wide, that the greater part of the bosom lay open to the view.

I may here remark, by the way, that in the East women do not affect so much secrecy with the bosom as among us. The strictest sense of shame is satisfied with the veiling of the face. All other parts of the body are treated with comparative carelessness.

This sense of becomingness and decorum, indwelling as it really does in all peoples, though revealing itself in the most dissimilar ways, is a singular thing. A Scottish lassie can faint away from sheer bashfulness when she sees a man with a beard; but finds it quite in accordance with her conceptions of decency that the men should go without trousers; a circumstance that would drive the blood of modesty into the cheeks of ladies of other lands. A bathing European damsel, seeing herself espied by men's eyes, will hide all else rather than her face. A fair Asiatic, in similar circumstances, will expose all else rather than her face. These few examples may suffice to show how difficult it is, in what is called custom and propriety, to draw the boundary line between the serious and the comic, between wisdom and folly. The man of limited range is always most inclined to smile at that which extends beyond his narrow circle of vision; the wider the view, the milder the judgment.

But return we to the fair Armenians who occasioned this digression.

From my dwelling I often gazed for hours together on the social doings at the house of Tamamshev and Tumanov. There before me sat the numerous female guests in the circle above described, whose centre was covered by a table-top loaded with pastry, refreshments, and preserved sweets of all kinds. For a long time they all remained mute and motionless as wax-figures. Then, one after another, they loosened their tshotkas (rosaries, not used for praying, but for playing, and worn as bracelets) from their arms, and, for want of a better pastime, let the pearls glide slowly down the silken threads, without any other interruption than an occasional sipping of the dainties standing on the table-top. Now and then one of the elder ladies broke the silence to relate a story or a tale, when the rest would listen so intensely, that the playing with the tshotka was altogether forgotten. Here ended the claims of these females to social enjoyment. A lively conversation, shared by the whole company, was not to be thought of.

In the other apartments, where the men held

their banquet, more stir and noise were perceptible. Here every acquaintance of the family had free admission, and he who could drink the most of the wine of the land was the most welcome guest. As, with the women, playing with the tshotka, so, with the men, drinking was the principal thing; and like as the wine of this country is kept in leather-bags, smeared with naphtha, so, truly, a stomach lined with the same material was needed to match the Armenians in wine-drinking.

In those Armenian and Georgian houses where, with the maintenance of all other national peculiarities, the social relation is more accommodated to European manners, it has become usual, in consequence of the always ennobling influence of woman, for the drinking-bouts to be carried on with more moderation, and the conversation with more vivacity.

Into such a mixed society, on the occasion of an Armenian marriage, I wish to lead my friendly reader, and should at once plunge "in medias res," were it not that I always hold to the principle of introducing, with historical faithfulness,

into my depicturings of life the preparatory and explanatory passages.

With a spirit so dull and heavy as mine, I invariably needed a stimulating preparation to place myself in strange situations with the requisite certainty and justness of vision. On this account, my days of labour were strictly separated from my days of pleasure. If, in the morning, I had before me a specially-interesting invitation for the evening, no serious study was that day to be thought of. It was then my custom to seek out one or two good acquaintances; to wander with them through the city; to loiter in the bazaar; to climb about among the half-subterranean dwellings of the Georgians; to watch the living presentments of caravansary, street, and market; and to record with a passage or two in my journal all that was new and of interest for abiding remembrance.

So it happened ^{on} that day when I received the invitation to the Armenian wedding; I laid my books and papers aside, and sallied out in quest of some acquaintances to bear me company.

An irregular unpaved road led from my

dwelling, winding away down hill between vineyards, into the principal street of Tiflis, bounded on the right by the palace of the Sardaar (Commander-in-chief), and on the left by the new and almost as magnificent Gymnasium.

Here my way was this time blocked up by a numerous swarm of Tartars, who, in the space between the Gymnasium and the Sardaar's palace, had partly encamped on the ground, and were partly standing about in scattered groups; while their wrathful looks, lively movements, and loud words, excited my curiosity to the highest pitch. I soon ascertained that it was a deputation, two or three hundred strong, from the interior of the country, who had come to Tiflis for the purpose of praying the Sardaar to revoke a law ordaining that the Tartars should pay their tribute for the future in sheep.

Some of the more conspicuous among them had gone as spokesmen into the Sardaar's dwelling; and he being absent on a journey, they had applied to his representative, who vainly endeavoured to get rid of the petitioners by indefinite

promises. They required a definite answer, and gave him to understand, that, until such an answer was granted, the Tartar multitude encamped outside would not quit Tiflis.

The representative Governor-General immediately gave command quietly to intimate to the Tartars that they must leave the city without more ado; and, in case they did not comply with this direction, to summon Cossacks to expel them by force. This, however, was a matter of no slight difficulty; for, although the Tartars were unarmed (such a host would not otherwise have been admitted into the city), they opposed themselves to the Cossacks so sturdily with their strong fists, that it was necessary to send for reinforcements, and to make use of the naked steel, before the wild descendants of the Golden Horde were fairly driven from the city.

Already during the spectacle, which had called the whole neighbourhood out, I had met with several acquaintances ready at once to accompany me in my stroll.

We had scarcely proceeded a hundred yards, when, in the Erivan-square, which is connected

with the great street of Tiflis, a new spectacle of a peculiar kind claimed our attention.

About a dozen old women, veiled from head to foot in the white tshadra, of miserable appearance, and for the most part of frightful ugliness, came pacing along the square with solemn step, and halted in an adjacent street.

One or two of the ghostly-looking creatures vanished into a Georgian house, re-appearing, however, after a short interval, to set themselves again in motion with the train. The same manœuvre was repeated at every Georgian house.

In explanation of this singular spectacle, I was told that, in every time of continuous drought, the poor Georgian women are accustomed to walk in procession from house to house, to collect alms, and, in return, to pray to the good God that He would open the fountain of his mercy, and send down rain on the thirsting earth.

To this end they wander, laden with crosses, images of the saints, and other pious appurtenances, out into the open country, to pray on the fields, and for the prosperity of those who have

contributed offering-gifts. This solemnity, with the preliminary alms-gathering, is repeated daily, until, at last, Heaven hears the prayers, and sends rain on the earth.

We did not follow the pious sisters further; it being my intention to seek out Mirza-Shaffy, and request him to defer the lesson of wisdom appointed for the evening to another day. I had never before seen the Wise Man in his own dwelling, and was therefore very desirous of casting a glance on his domestic arrangements; a desire which my companions, who had already heard much of Mirza-Shaffy, lively shared.

We wended our way in the direction of the Kyros, through a crooked, filthy street, bordered on both sides by gray saklis, and only allowing us here and there a glimpse of a somewhat more habitable building. Of course there is no such thing as house-numbering here; and Georgian or Tartar saklis are as hard to be distinguished from each other as mole-hills. Accordingly we had much ado to find the dwelling of the Wise Man, although he had described the place to me pretty exactly. First, we scared away from a roof, by

merely accosting them, a pair of young red-trouserred maidens, who, instead of answering the question submitted to them, vanished with lightning-speed into their subterranean abode. Then we were scared away ourselves by a pair of grinning wide-mouthed dogs, which, as we were turning into a court, in pursuance of our journey of discovery, rushed down loose upon us with a furious howl. An old Tartar, eyeing us with an earnest look as he waddled past, replied to our inquiry after Mirza-Shaffy's abode by pointing towards a distant group of houses, and then went his way without further concerning himself about us. At last, we were fortunate enough to fall in with a black-eyed youth, enveloped in a most fantastic medley of old clothes of all colours, who undertook for an abbas (about 6*d.*) to conduct us to the retreat of the Wise Man of Gjändsha. He first took us back a part of the way we had come; encouraged us by his example to climb over a series of saklis—in which exploit we had to proceed with great caution, to avoid falling through the openings in the flat roofs, uninvited, into the house of some family beneath—until we

suddenly saw ourselves transported into a little turn-again alley running down from the mountain, where a low but rather extensive building opened before us, inclosing with its dusky wings anything but a clean and smooth court-yard. In the left wing, behind which some trees betrayed the neighbourhood of a garden, dwelled Mirza-Shaffy.

Scarcely had we set foot in the court, when a frightful canine howl again arrested our progress, and obliged us to stand on the defensive. By dint, however, of the strangest guttural and hissing sounds on the part of our youthful guide, the loose-leaping loud-barking monsters were soon compelled to retreat; a step or two more, and we found ourselves at the dwelling of Mirza-Shaffy.

The door was opened by the same slim, supple-limbed Tartar youngster, by whose instrumentality Mirza-Shaffy formerly came into possession of my English scissors, having cast upon them the glance of desire.

We stepped into a little, unadorned apartment, connected with a larger, somewhat more

comfortably-furnished room. The former, which was occupied by the young Tartar, constituted as it were the anteroom to the latter, where Mirza-Shaffy had his abode. Both rooms were white-washed; the floor was covered with mats; there were niches in the side walls, and in the background of the larger apartment a kind of fireplace was constructed. The whole wore a simple and neat appearance.

As we entered, Mirza-Shaffy lay with his legs bent underneath him, on the low, crimson divan, and seemed to be exclusively engaged in smoking the pipe of contemplation. Before him, on a little table-top, stood a tall Persian kalljan, whose high-lying coal bore witness of its having been just replenished with fresh tom-bagju, as the coarse-cut tobacco, used for the kalljan and nargilé, is called, in contradistinction to the fine-cut (tütin), appropriated to the tshibuq.

The Wise Man raised himself slowly when he became sensible of our presence, greeted us with a hearty "Chosh gjäldinniz!" (Be ye welcome!) and only resumed his seat when we had all taken our places round him. The young Tartar mean-

while busied himself unbidden in serving us with coffee and pipes; nor did the conversation properly begin, until each of us had his fuming bowl at his side, and his fuming tshibuq in his mouth.

I had a great desire to look more narrowly about me, and become acquainted with the entire domestic arrangement in detail, but held myself in forcible restraint, and bade my companions do the same, knowing that it would essentially lower us in the Wise Man's estimation, if we allowed the glance of curiosity to rove at once from corner to corner.

I therefore waited for a favourable opportunity; and having stated the object of my visit, turned the conversation first upon the difficulties we had had to surmount in order to gain the residence of Mirza-Shaffy. "How dost thou ever manage," I concluded, "with thy nice green slippers and pretty chequered stockings, to make the long way to me, in bad weather, without defilement, whilst we, even in fine weather, have not come off unsoiled?"

"Adad der — use does that!" rejoined he,

smiling. Thereupon he turned with a general question to my two companions, who, however, could not directly reply, because they did not understand Tartar. This was just what he wanted to know, in order to ascertain from me whether they might be trusted in the article of wine-drinking. Having become, at my suggestion, a candidate for a situation in the Gymnasium, and the result not being yet decided, he did not wish to multiply, by indiscretion, the difficulties which pious rivals had laid in his way.

After I had completely set him at rest concerning my companions, he called to the Tartar youth, squatting in the next room, the opening words of a song of Hafiz, "Ssaki, bijar badé! Boy, bring wine!" The boy sprang up with the word, and hastened noiselessly out at the door. One saw, by the brisk intelligence of his manner, that such commissions were nothing new to him.

"Who is the young man?" inquired I of Mirza-Shaffy.

"A poor relative of mine," replied the Wise

Man, "whom I took into the house on the death of his father, to instruct in wisdom. Nothing, however, is to be done with him in this way; the fellow is destined by Nature for the cowl, and, therefore, I quietly let him follow his resolution of becoming a priest. The Mushtahid passes with him for a greater authority than I, and a kiss on the hand of the marvellous old saint is sweeter to his taste than a glass of wine from me. It would not at all surprise me if the lad should one day become Mushtahid himself; he has all the needful material. He can make faces like a dervish, and twist and wind like an eel. All day long he sits and writes old prayers and sacred stories, whereby he edifies himself and earns a trifle into the bargain . . ."

Whilst Mirza-Shaffy was still speaking, the young saint came with a great pitcher of wine into the room, brought forth from a niche in the wall, covered by a red silk curtain, some glasses of various shapes, and was just on the point of pouring out for us, when Mirza-Shaffy took the pitcher from him with the words:—"Leave the wine-pouring to me!—Go, then, and fetch thy

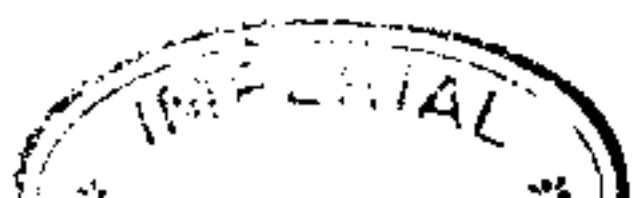
papers : the young wise man here wishes to see what thou hast written this week."

The boy went, and produced two neatly-written sheets, one bearing the title, "Hymn on the Arrival of the Russians at Erivan," and the other, "Prayer of the Tartars of Karabagh for the great Padishah of the Russians, the Ruler of the Earth, &c."

The first sheet was written in the Tartar, the second in the Arabian language, intermingled with Persian verses, with such nicety and care that I could not forbear saying something pretty to the writer, and expressing the wish to possess a similarly-written copy of both sheets.

The young saint, delighted at the praise bestowed on him, would at once have laid the sheets at my feet, but Mirza-Shaffy sent him away, and said to me :—

"Let that do for to-day ; he can first take a copy of them, and at our next lesson I will bring the Hymn and the Prayer with me, and explain them both ; and if thou shouldst grow more pious in consequence, I will make a vow to drink no more wine!"



“It would delight me just to cast a glance at thy library, O wise man! thou hast, I know, quite other books than pious hymns and prayers.”

“I can sing with Hafiz,” rejoined the Wise Man, smiling :—

“ ’T is long since I with the last of my books
At the tavern for wine compounded,
Whereby the tavern transfigured looks,
With a glory divine enrouded !

The Wise Man’s book is the flask of wine,
His house of prayer the tavern—
Thy songs, O Hafiz, have evermore
To the praise of wine redounded ! ”

“In fact,” he continued, “there is need of no camel to carry away my books.” And he showed me a small but very valuable collection of Persian and Arabian manuscripts, poetical and philosophical, the whole of his literary wealth. I could not repress the inquiry :—

“ But how is it possible, O Wise Man ! that thou dost daily scatter around thee the fairest flowers of Oriental poetry, as the east wind the flowers of spring, when the fountain from which thou drawest is so small ? ”

“ The fountain is small in compass, but great in content. Whatever good things the best poets have written I know by heart ; and if I forget aught thereof, I learn it again ; but of bad poets I read nothing at all : what need have I of their works ? The richer I grow in wisdom, the poorer I grow in books. Every time I hold a review, I still find something superfluous. Better is it to read one good book a hundred times, than a hundred bad books once. The more books the more confusion. I have never succeeded in writing a good poem after reading the poems of others ; because then the thoughts and expressions of others too easily creep in. I have always succeeded in writing a good poem when I have been enchanted by beautiful eyes, by lovely hands and feet, by fragrant flowers, by good wine, by the pure air of spring : these are the fountains one must draw from ! (Here the Wise Man sipped

down a glass of wine, poured out again immediately, and then continued, still more enthusiastically.)—The least flower-garden yields me more fragrance than the greatest desert with its oases and treasure-laden caravans. From a rosy maiden's cheek I drink in more inspiration than from all the poets taken together. A little innocent child attunes me more to piety and devotion than the longest sermon. I sip more wit from a glass of wine than from the most learned works of Sufis and philosophers . . .”

He filled himself a fresh tshibuq, whilst I looked at my watch, for the day was drawing fast to a close.

“It is time to take our leave,” said I, “we have yet to dress for the wedding ; but do not let us depart, O Wise Man! without singing us a little song. The nightingale sings sweetest in damp places, and the singer over his wine. I love to take with me from the merry carousal the strain of a pleasant song to charm me on the way.”

“Every one has his peculiar fancy,” replied the Wise Man :

“The saint loves the serious,
The sad man the doleful,
The priest the mysterious,
The drinker his bowlful !

The soldier the national,
The tyrant the wrongful,
The wise man the rational,
The singer the songful !”

“What can be more rational,” exclaimed I,
“than a song of wisdom to the sound of the
wine-bowl !”

The Wise Man began anew:—

“When Mirza-Shaffy’s red lips outshine
With flashes of wit as he sips his wine,
How the heart doth bound in the shouting round
Of the revellers jolly !

They see that up from the sparkling cup,
Aye rises, armed with invincible might,
In league with wisdom a jovial sprite,
To take vengeance on folly !”

“As I now go to array my body in festal ap-

parel, so has thy song, O Mirza-Shaffy! arrayed my spirit in festivity. And even the tribute of thanks and joy which I would have expressed to thee, hast thou taken out of my mouth, and embodied in thine own song!"

As I thus addressed him, we had risen to take our departure, and he was conducting us out by the back-door of the house, a shorter way through the garden. And again he began:—

"From thy lip, when fancy thy spirit inflames,

Let a bright flash of wit in season have broken:

'Thou hast taken the word from my mouth,' each ex-claims,

'For oft have I thought what thou hast outspoken!'

O Mirza-Shaffy! 't is thy destiny,

What other men think to write down with thy hand—
Many thoughts hast thou lit by the light of thy wit,
Thy sayings of wisdom abound in the land!"

"I need add no more praise," I rejoined;
"but tell me, O Wise Man! how thou contrivest to bring together rhyme, figure, and

thought so quickly; dost thou require, then, no preparation at all for thy songs?"

The garden through which we were passing already wore the variegated dress of spring. The flowers had come forth in the grass; the vine had acquired its knots; from the almond-trees the white blossoms fell off like snow-flakes; and the rose-bushes had begun to bud.

Mirza-Shaffy stretched out his hand, and gathered a nosegay of flowers; then, extending it to me, said, "See, this nosegay has been gathered in a moment, but the flowers which compose it have not in a moment grown! So is it with my songs."

* * * * *

AN ARMENIAN MARRIAGE.

Having put on black attire, we now wend our way to the house, where, in the neighbourhood of the Armenian Cathedral, the marriage is to be celebrated.

The Armenian houses in Tiflis form the transition from the Georgian and Tartar saklis to

the Russian palaces in the new quarter of the town. They are thoroughly comfortable and cleanly; many even are fitted up with an elegance all their own, combining the European and Asiatic elements in one. Some have separate forecourts, others porches supported on pillars, and most of them are encircled by either two or three wooden galleries, which, in the narrow streets, are supplied by balconies.

The house of the rich Armenian merchant to whose marriage festival we are tending is one of the most commodious and best-arranged. Already we discover from afar that festivity reigns within. The lofty approach to the forecourt, and the walls on either side, are spangled over with hundreds of many-coloured lamps. Droskies and equipages throng upon the court within. The house, in the background, beams, as if flames leaped forth from walls and roofs. The airy galleries, encompassing the house threefold, are thickly hung with lamps. In like manner, regular chains of lamps are suspended from one to another of the brightly-illuminated windows, while torches blaze upon the roof.

On our entrance into the flashing apartments we find a numerous company, consisting chiefly of Georgians and Armenians, already assembled; the women all of them in their picturesque national costume; among the men a few exceptions in the black dress-coat and uniform. The space adorned for the festival occupies the whole breadth of the building. With the exception of the room appointed for dancing, the floors of all the apartments are covered with gorgeous Persian carpets. In the large central room, table crowds on table, laden with strong drinks, and appetite-begetting delicacies of the most varied description: from the silently-effective liqueur, sipped out of silver bowls, to the wildly-foaming champagne; from the light, simple sardine, to the rich, stomach-loading salmon.

The other rooms are only sparingly provided with tables, and still more sparingly with seats. The women sit in groups on the low divan, which is partly overlaid with silk or velvet, partly spread with carpets, and extends round about along the walls. A lively conversation with these females, who for the most part sit there

motionless as figures in a wax-cabinet, is impossible for any length of time, unless one understands how to dissipate their bashfulness by quite peculiar means. Those alone of the elder ladies who, with the Russian language, have likewise acquired something of the Russian manner, and those of the younger who are educated in the nobility-school of Tiflis, and speak not only Russian but French, deport themselves in the conversation without constraint.

The pearl among the female guests is the young princess Nassinka Orbeljanov, one of the loveliest flowers that have ever grown under Georgia's sky. The now impoverished race of Orbeljanov, whose history reaches back till long before the birth of Christ, was once rich in fame, might, and treasures. The forefathers of the young princess reigned as kings in Georgia and Armenia. But all the splendour and renown of her ancestry outweigh not the beauty of the young Princess Nassinka. She is none of those voluptuous figures that one finds prevailing in Georgia; but she has a fineness of feature, a delicacy of limb, an elegance of hand and foot,

a luxuriance of hair, and so dovelike an expression of the eye, that she numbers with the loveliest visions of the Morning-land my memory has retained.

Now she is dancing the Lesghinka with a young Armenian, and old and young come streaming hither, women and maidens leave their seats, to gaze on the lovely being. She modestly casts down her eyes, bends back her fairy head, and sets her delicate arms akimbo; suddenly she lets her arms fall wavily downward, and hops light-footed away to her partner standing opposite; the latter puts himself in like manner in motion, and hastens to meet her; but both slip past each other without touching; and so they glide into a succession of little circles, ever approaching to meet, and ever avoiding contact. The clapping of hands of the spectators accompanies the movements of the dancers.

When the dance had come to an end, the attention of the guests was claimed by the four Rhapsodists, who glorified the festival with music and singing. One played the Tar, another the Tshianu, a third the Sasz, a fourth

the Deira, stringed instruments of various shapes, and sang, the while, songs in praise of the family, of the bridal pair, and of the guests.

All now thronged around the singers, of whom especially one blind old man obtained the regard of the company, because he had something pleasant to say in verse to every one who asked him for it. His songs were of no particular merit, but produced their effect by the magic of improvisation.

In a room close by stood green tables, at which various groups of old Armenians were playing at chess and lottery, whilst some Russian Tshinovniks made a party at whist.

Meanwhile a multitude of servants made a continual round, handing about the choicest dainties, and in particular sweet pastry of every kind. All this was merely done by way of preliminary refreshment; for the actual supper did not take place until after the nuptial ceremony, which was consummated in the neighbouring cathedral in the presence of all the guests.

The interior of the venerable old building, whither we followed the bridal pair about the

twelfth hour, made on us, in the scanty illumination, an awful impression ; which was soon, however, effaced as the glancing eye roved among the many pretty women and maidens who were come to witness the solemnity. Above and below they thronged together, group on group, separated by iron-trellises from the men, according to the custom of the Armenian Church.

As perhaps, too, many of my fair readers may be curious to know the details of an Armenian marriage ceremony, I will in the sequel give a full description thereof, wrought to the smallest point with all the faithfulness and scrupulosity which the importance of the subject demands.

The ceremony begins with the blessing of the wedding-ring, which is laid on a plate, the Deacon uttering the words,—

“ Now let us pray to the Lord of Peace. Look down upon us, Redeemer ! have compassion on us and bless us, O Lord ! ”

Hereupon the Priest sings,—

“ Blessing and glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, now and evermore, and from everlasting to everlasting. Amen ! ”

Therewith he swings the censer, which the Deacon has handed to him. A hymn is then sung from the Armenian Hymn-book, and the 18th Psalm recited at full length; although the only passage of this Psalm that can possibly refer to matrimony occurs in the 19th verse, where it is said, "He brought me forth also into a large place; he delivered me, because he delighted in me." Passages are then rehearsed from the Song of Solomon, viii. 14; from the Prophet Hosea, xiv. 6; from Isaiah, xxvii. 6; from the Epistle to the Galatians, iv. 27; and from the Gospel of Luke, i. 26.

And again the Deacon begins,—

"Let us entreat the Lord for the preservation of the faithful, of those who are in his presence, and of those whom He here invites to union."

Hereupon the Priest prays,—

"Everlasting God and Creator of the Universe! We beseech and implore Thee, Thou who, full of compassion, carest for thy creatures, and lovest the children of men, graciously hear, O Lord, our prayers! As Thou didst ordain the marriages of our fathers according to the Law of

Moses, so, by the resurrection and ascension of thine Only-begotten, hast Thou taught us a new command, and appointed the holy cross for the hallowing of the marriage of those who believe in Thee and in thine only-begotten Son. Give now, therefore, O Lord, through the all-conquering cross, strength and vigour to those who build upon Thee. Keep far from them the spirit of hypocrisy and disobedience, and all evil desires; preserve them from folly and shame, from dark ways, and from uncleanness of life. Grant that this cross* be for the laying and consecrating of a firm foundation, whereon the building of holy matrimony shall be raised. Adorn their head with the crown of beauty, shed on them the blessing of the Holy Trinity, which is needful for them, and which brings them glory and honour, now and evermore, and from everlasting to everlasting. Amen! Peace be with all! Holy and all-adorable Father, Thou who hast blessed and consecrated this cross in the

* The old Armenians adopted the holy cross, instead of an earthly symbol, as the sign of betrothal.

name of thine Only-begotten, through the hand of thy sinful servant, through the blessing of thy Holy Spirit; now also I beseech thee, O Lord, send down thy Holy Spirit for the consecrating of the building whose foundation I here lay. Preserve these two unspotted towards each other; lead and guide them at the hour when I shall place the crown of glory on their head; for to Thee alone is the honour, and to Thee alone belongs the glory and the power, now and evermore, and from everlasting to everlasting. Amen !”

Hereupon the ring is given to the bride, and the Deacon speaks,—

“ By the holy cross let us pray to the Lord, that He will deliver us by the same from all sins, and redeem us by the grace of his loving-kindness.

“ Almighty Lord, our God ! redeem us and have compassion upon us ! ”

The Priest joins in,—“ Thou Shield and Hope of the Faithful, Christ, our God ! preserve thy servants ! Glory be to the Lord ! ”

The Lord's Prayer follows, and, with it, the

blessing of the wedding-ring closes, and the blessing of the "Dress of the Crown" begins.

The dress is brought before the altar, with a repetition of the ceremony described at the outset. The Deacon says,—“Let us pray to the Lord of Peace,” &c., &c., whereupon the Priest responds,—“Praise and glory be to the Father, and to the Son,” &c., &c. Another hymn is sung; then follows Psalm xliv., “To the Chief Musician for the Sons of Korah;” wherein, as before, occurs nothing relative to matrimony (though verse 22—“Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter”—very accurately marks the political condition of the Armenians). Further, passages are recited from the Prophet Isaiah, lxi. 10, from the 1st Epistle of Peter, iii. 1, and from the Gospel of John, ii. 1. Then the Deacon begins again,—“Let us pray to the Lord,” &c., and the Priest joins in,—“Praise and glory be to the Father, and to the Son!” Hereupon he blesses the raiment of the bridegroom with the sign of the cross, and utters the following prayer:—

“Bless, O Christ, our God! with spiritual

blessings this bridal raiment, so that to him who puts it on the evil brood of demons and enchanters may not dare come near; but that he, strengthened by the might of thy holy cross, may be redeemed from all the snares of Satan. And to Thee will we ascribe glory, and honour, and power, now and evermore, and from everlasting to everlasting!"

After the Priest has then once more blessed the raiment with the sign of the cross, praying therewith, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen!" the raiment is put on the bridegroom, whilst an appropriate hymn is sung. At the conclusion of the blessing, the Deacon once more utters the words, "By the holy cross let us pray to the Lord," &c.

Exactly the same ceremony takes place in the blessing of the dress of the bride, with this difference only, that she does not array herself in her bridal attire before the altar, but concealed from the eyes of men in a separate room; the singing and the concluding prayer being also here omitted.

Before now the actual marrying, the crowning, is consummated, the train returns again to the house of the bride. Here the latter must kneel down at the feet of the bridegroom, whilst over her are spoken the words, "I have found David, my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him: with whom my hand shall be established; mine arm also shall strengthen him."

Hereupon the Priest takes the right hand of the bride, and places it in the right hand of the bridegroom, with the words, "God took the right hand of Eve, and placed it in the right hand of Adam, and Adam said, 'This is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh. What, therefore, God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.'"

The Deacon,—

"Let us pray to the Lord of Peace," &c.

The Priest,—

"Praise and glory be to the Father, and to the Son!"

A hymn is sung once more, after which the Priest holds the cross over the heads of the bridegroom and bride, pronouncing at the same time the following prayer:—

“Everlasting Lord God! who dost join together in union the unbound and the separated, and by union dost bind them together inseparably; who didst bless Isaac and Rebecca, and hast revealed them as heirs of thy promise, in that Thou, by thine unerring word, didst multiply their offspring as the sands on the sea-shore: Bless now, also, gracious and merciful God! this thy servant, and this thy handmaid through thy holiness; lead them, that they may walk in good works, and in the way of righteousness, to do what is well pleasing before Thee; that they may live in this world according to thy commands, and see their children’s children in old age; and that in the life to come they may share the imperishable treasures and the unfading crown, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom be glory, honour, and power, now and evermore, and from everlasting to everlasting, Amen! Lord God, who, from the heathen, hast betrothed the

holy Church to present it to Thyself, the heavenly Bridegroom, and who hast appointed for a crown the all-conquering holy sign; who dost gather together the scattered, and unite them in the indissoluble bond of the covenant; who didst bless the patriarchs, and hast set them forth as heirs of thy promises, bless now, also, thy servant and handmaid by the might of thy cross; for Thou art merciful and lovest the children of men, and to Thee belongs glory, honour, and power, now and evermore, and from everlasting to everlasting, Amen!"

The Deacon,—

"By the holy cross let us pray to the Lord,"
&c., &c.

These solemnities being ended, they return into the church, make their confession of sins, and the Priest recites the 121st Psalm. Hereupon two three-threaded strings are twisted, for the twining of the crowns wherewith the bridal pair are crowned at the consummation of the marriage. The string, wound of three threads, is the emblem of the Trinity. On the twisting of the bridegroom's string, they sing the 20th, and on the twisting of the bride's, the 24th Psalm.

Hereupon the Priest takes the cross, delivers a discourse to the bride and bridegroom on the meaning of marriage, and then proposes to them the question, "Do you promise before God, in the fear of God, to preserve towards each other the constancy of God-given love; and with the same love, through the fear of God, willingly to bear the mutual burden, especially the bodily sufferings, lameness, blindness, long and incurable sickness, and other evils, as the laws of God command; do you promise, do you take upon yourselves, and will you endeavour to fulfil these things?" and they answer, "Yes." Thereupon the Priest places the right hand of the bride in the right hand of the bridegroom, and says to the latter—"According to the command of God, which God gave to our forefathers, I, the Priest N. N., now give thee this bride for obedience; art thou her master?" The bridegroom says,— "I am her master by the will of God." Then turns the Priest to the bride, and says, "Art thou obedient?" The bride answers, "I am obedient, according to the command of God." The same questions and answers are repeated

three times. Then says the Priest, "If ye, therefore, remain with one another in the love of God, then shall the care of God preserve your going out and coming in, and bless the works of your hands, and increase you with spiritual and temporal blessings, that ye, living here in peace and piety, may be found worthy to attain the blessings promised hereafter, through the grace of Christ, to whom be glory, honour, and power, now and evermore."

The 118th Psalm is then recited, to the words, "Open to me the gates of righteousness, I will go in to them, and I will praise the Lord."

They now enter through the opened door into the Holy of Holies, singing the 99th Psalm. Then says the Deacon, "By the holy Church let us now pray to the Lord, that He by it will redeem us from sin, and save us by the grace of his loving-kindness. Almighty Lord, our God! redeem us, and have mercy upon us!"

The Priest,—

"At the door of the holy Temple, and before the godly and shining holy symbols, in this holy place, we worship, bowed in awe. We praise thy

holy, wondrous, and triumphant glory, O Christ; our God! and offer Thee honour and praise, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, now and evermore, and from everlasting to everlasting, Amen!"

The Priest now leads the bride and bridegroom, and places them before the altar, and they repeat the opening prayer of the Church: "Send peace to thy holy Church, peace and immovableness against the war of foes; and strengthen in one faith the Catholic Church. Thee we acknowledge, Lord and God! bless us and deliver us."

The Deacon,—

"Let us pray to the Lord of Peace," &c.

The Priest,—

"Praise and glory be to the Father, and to the Son!"

The 92nd Psalm is then sung, and the already oft-repeated formulas are repeated again.

The bride and bridegroom kiss the cross, and the Priest, in his robes, says:—

"Gracious and full of compassion art Thou, O God, and to Thee belongs glory and power, Lord! in thy might the king is glad; in thy salvation he greatly rejoices. Thou hast granted

him the desire of his heart, and the wish of his lips Thou hast not withholden from him. Thou hast suffered him to attain to the blessing of thy sweetness, and hast placed upon his head the crown of a precious stone. Hallelujah! Hallelujah!"

The following passages are then rehearsed: Genesis, i. 26-28; Proverbs of Solomon, v. 18, 19; Isaiah lxi. 9; Epistle to the Ephesians, v. 22; Gospel of Matthew, xix. 1-9. Then follows the Belief, whereupon the Deacon says, "Let us pray to the Lord to lead our steps in the way of peace. Lord! in mercy remove from us all thoughts of evil! Let us pray to the Lord, to give us wholesome thoughts and virtuous lives; let us pray to the Lord, to keep us under the shadow of his Almighty hand; let us pray to the Lord, quickly to put our adversaries under our feet; let us pray to the Lord, for the departed souls, who in the true and right faith are fallen asleep in Christ; let us pray to the Lord," and so forth.

The crowns are laid before the altar, the Priest blesses them, and utters the following prayer:—

“ O Lord, God of might, and Creator of all creatures ! Thou who didst take earth from earth, and form man in thine image ; male and female madest Thou them, and blessedst them, in that Thou saidst : ‘ Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it.’ Thy care and love as Creator towards thy creatures is imaged forth in thine only-begotten beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, in that He came, and was born of the Holy Virgin, and called men to a new life, and gave the first sign at the marriage in Cana of Galilee, where He rejoiced the marriage-house by a divine miracle, and changed the water into wine. So now, O Lord ! we pray Thee, bless this marriage as that of the patriarchs, by keeping thy servant and handmaid unspotted in spiritual love and unity in this life. Make their seed fruitful ; let their children grow up in modesty and good manners, to the praise of thy all-holy Name ; may they prolong their life in this world in peace to a good old age, and be accounted worthy of the endless joys of the upper marriage-chamber, with all who love thy Name, through the grace and loving-kindness of thine only-be-

gotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory, honour, and power, now and evermore, and from everlasting to everlasting, Amen! Peace be with all! We humble ourselves before God. Praised be thy Name, Almighty God, who hast created all thy creatures, the heavenly and the earthly, by thy living word, and fashioned man by thy hand, after the image of thy divine form. Thou hast ordained and united with him, as companion of life, the bone which Thou didst take from his bone, and the flesh from his flesh, and they twain became one body. Thou alone art merciful, who hast prepared for our humanity the crown of heaven and earth. Bless, O Lord! the marriage of these with thy loving-kindness, as Thou didst bless the marriage of Abraham and Sarah, of Isaac and Rebecca, of Jacob and Rachel, and as Thou hast spoken by thine Apostle, 'Honourable is marriage, and holy the marriage-bed.' Keep holy the marriage-bed of these, and give them offspring according to thy will, that they may be blessed in thy living word, as Thou hast said: 'Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth!

Let them be fruitful in the fruits of holiness ; to the end that their posterity may multiply on the earth, and that they may be worthy, through thine inheritance, to praise the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, now and evermore, and from everlasting to everlasting !”

Hereupon he takes the crowns, crosses them, places them on the head of the bride and bridegroom, and utters the following prayer :—

“ In thy name, thou living God and Lord, Creator of heaven and earth, who madest all things by the word of thy command ! Thou didst form Adam, the first man, and didst confirm his marriage with Eve ; Thou crownedst them with thy glory, and saidst, ‘ Behold, they are good ! ’ Thou didst bless the marriage of Seth, and by him the earth was peopled until Noah. Thou didst bless the marriage of Noah, and by him was marriage transmitted to Abraham. Thou didst bless the marriage of Abraham and Sarah, of Isaac and Rebecca, of Jacob and Rachel, and they multiplied themselves on earth, and were crowned in heaven. Thou didst bless David, of the tribe of Judah, and the Virgin

Mary, of the descendants of David, and of her wast Thou born, Redeemer of the World! for Thou becamest the crowner of all the holy. By thy blessing shall these crowns be blessed, and the marriage of these; that this thy servant and this thy handmaid may spend their whole life in the fear of God; that Satan may remove afar from their midst, and thy loving-kindness live around them. And to Thee will we render praise and glory, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, now and evermore."

Hereupon the Deacon prays, the sacrifice of the mass is brought, and they take part in the holy sacrament.

Again there follow singing, and the above-quoted double prayer between the Priest and Deacon; wherewith the church solemnity is concluded, and the train returns with songs to the bridal-house.

Arrived here, the bridegroom is seated on a sofa, and the bride at his right hand. The Priest fills a goblet with wine, blesses it, and gives the newly-married pair to drink thereof.

* * * * *

Up to this point, the nuptial solemnities at which I was present agreed substantially (allowing, *i. e.*, for sundry abbreviations and omissions of the numberless hymns, citations, and prayers) with the prescriptions and instructions of the old Armenian church-books. But now there followed various ceremonies, which I do not find mentioned in any book, and which I here introduce, in order to remain true to the course of things; while the reader who is curious in these matters may compare the description here given with a passage or two subjoined in the Appendix of this book⁶.

First of all a sword was given into the hands of the bridegroom, which he, standing at the door, held aloft, and let the bride slip under, as a sign that she, beneath his manly protection, should escape from all dangers and embarrassments.

Then sweet water was given to the married pair, as a foretaste of the pure and sweet enjoyments of conjugal love; or, according to another explanation, in remembrance of the marriage at Cana, where the water was changed into wine by the hand of the Saviour.

Lastly, a plate was offered to the bridegroom, which he threw upon the ground, and trod in pieces with his feet. The meaning attached to this ceremony is probably the same as that connected with the breaking of the pitcher at our "Polterabenden," or with the breaking of the glass at the marriage festivals of the Jews.

When the solemnity had come to an end, dancing, playing, and singing began anew, whilst, in the dining-hall, the feast was being made ready. Once again did the whole company crowd into the room, where the Princess Orbeljanov, with the brother of the bridegroom, amid the clapping of hands of the spectators, was bounding in the dance of the Lesghinka. And as often as my eye glanced at the little delicately-shod feet, I thought of the words of Solomon's Song: "How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter!"

At length, after the many and rich marriage presents had been duly inspected by the guests, the supper began; and, indeed, it was high time for it! The long standing in the church, as well as the hearing of the many prayers, hymns,

psalms, sayings, and exhortations, had awakened in most of us a formal sensation of abstinence.

The viands would have been altogether excellent, had not the various kinds of pilav (or, as it was there pronounced, plov) savoured far too strongly of the saffron with which the rice was overstrewed inch-deep, and had not good roast meat, in the German sense of the word, been, in Tiflis, owing to the almost uniformly bad flesh and the defective cookery, one of the impossibilities. On the other hand, the fish, in their manifold preparation, the pastry, and sweets, left nothing to be wished for. In like manner the wines, for which Georgia, Armenia, France, and the Rhine, had furnished their tribute, were worthy of all praise.

As long as eating and drinking kept each other in equilibrium, matters went on at the tables pretty quietly. But when the substantial viands were removed, and the champagne began to flow, and the drinking got the upper hand, there arose a confusion of voices, such as only a conversation carried on with Asiatic vivacity, and

by means of half a dozen languages at once, is capable of producing.

In a corner of the room, at a separate table, sat the singers and musicians; and whilst the former did their utmost to prevent their songs from dying away unheard, the latter sawed away so unmercifully at their instruments, that even the guests accustomed to such performances could not refrain from laughter.

A greater enjoyment than these demonstrations of musical power could afford to the ear, was presented to the eye in the spectacle of the handsome nuptial guests, as they sat in long rows along the tables, most of them in the ample Georgian and Armenian national costume. The louder the mirth grew in the hall, the more were the rows of the richly-decorated females thinned; and now the proper drinking first began. At every "Allahwerdy," he whom it concerned was obliged to pledge his challenger to the nail, with the rejoinder "Jachshí jol."* The stately Ar-

* Allahwerdy: God has given it! Jachshi jol: may it go a good way! The customary toast in the Caucasus,

chiréi, who had solemnized the marriage, as well as the other ecclesiastics, whose presence hallowed the festival, were not the worst drinkers. And when I left the house in the broad light of the morning, the rooms were still resounding loud with the clang of the goblets, and with the nuptial jubilation of the guests.

derived originally from the Tartars, but now also become naturalized among the Christian peoples.

CHAPTER II.

SESSIONS IN THE DIVAN OF WISDOM.

AN ARABIAN PRAYER AND A TARTAR HYMN IN
GLORIFICATION OF THE HOUSE OF THE "PADI-
SHAH OF THE RUSSIANS, THE LORD OF THE
WORLD, THE KING OF KINGS."

THE Prayer of the Tartars of Karabagh for the great Padishah of the Russians, the Ruler of the Earth, &c., and the Tartar Hymn on the arrival of the Russians at Erivan, formed, in the following sessions in the Divan of Wisdom, the principal subject of our conversation.

Mirza-Shaffy had taken the trouble to provide me with a copy of the first-mentioned document written with his own hand; and so admirably was it executed, that the Wise Man himself pronounced it to be a perfect masterpiece of Oriental

writing*. The diligence expended on it was all the more to be acknowledged, as its purport ran quite counter to my teacher's principles.

In the songs of Mirza-Shaffy, my friendly readers have only become acquainted with one side of the Oriental poetry of the present day; it is fair and reasonable that I should also make them acquainted with the other. For, although both Church gazettes and political journals are unknown to the Moslemin of the Caucasus, yet, through their priests and learned men, various parties have been formed amongst them; one whereof revels in the remembrances of a glorious past—when the Czar had to hold the stirrup to the Tartar ruler of the land—and indulges in dreams of a glorious future; while another flatters the dominant power, and brings down its God to earth, in order to raise the Czar to

* I indulge the hope that my honoured Publisher will cause a lithographic multiplication of this manuscript to be made. The double end will thus be answered, of presenting the friends of Mirza-Shaffy with a faithful fac-simile, and of showing Oriental scholars how Arabic and Persian are written at this day in the Caucasus.

- heaven; and a third, in fine, with philosophic serenity, lives in the enjoyment of the present, and renders to the Czar the things that are the Czar's, and to Allah the things that are Allah's.

Of course these parties, split asunder as they are, and oppressed as they live, stand not out in such marked distinction as the political and ecclesiastical parties of our own land; the several tendencies of sentiment being clearly apparent only in the priests and learned men, who may be regarded as the concrete consciousness of the people.

From which of the said parties the pious effusions here following in translation flow, the reader will easily guess.

THE PRAYER OF THE TARTARS OF KARABAGH.

“Glory to the King of kings. Great is his grace! He pours out his love upon all the elect. Glory to the Ruler of strength and of might, to the Lord of grace and of justice, who prescribes their course to the rivers and streams, and showers down his grace in the raindrops from the clouds, and distinguishes not between the guilty and the

guiltless, but sends them health, means of support, and food in abundance. Who created the heaven, the pillars of his throne, and the earth, the camp of his slaves, and the mountains, the nails of the earth, and laid the ninth heaven as the basis of his dominion, and kindled with his eye the light of the sun. Who adorned the neck of heaven with strings of pearls, with wandering stars. Whose hand has preserved the peoples of earth from sedition, and formed them to see his image in his wonderful works, and created all things gloriously after his own image. Who has appointed kings for the maintenance of order, for the oversight of the actions of his slaves, and preserved them from the oppression and tyranny of the people, and made them to be a support of the subject, and helpers of the needy and poor!

“Therefore, as the noblest jewel in the crown of his grace, He has sent down to earth the Empress, the Protectress of the world, the Queen of Queens, the Crown of the Sun, the Lender of grandeur to the kingly crown, the Adorner of the universe. The world-enlightening Sun, the Star of dominion, the high Degree, the rightful Queen

of all lands of the empire and of majesty. The Commandress of renowned and happy States, the Calmer of the peoples of the earth, the Adorner of earth and time. The Mistress, gifted with a heart like the sea, and with a highness like that of the mountain; the Queen of all the ranks of heaven, to be likened in her splendour to the stars of unnumbered multitudes. The Protectress of the kings of the world, and their Defendress; the most dazzling Pearl in the basket of fortune, the most flashing Star of the high and happy Constellation. The precious Stone of the kingly crown, the costly Pearl, the Jewel of the sea. The Adorner of the throne and the crown, the Commandress of the kings of the world; the Lender of vigour and might to the powerful on earth; the Subduer of the empire of greatness and glory; the Commandress of all rich and mighty States; the Bearer of the banner of stately dominion and stately renown; the Beautifier of the high and kingly throne. The Queen of the most renowned throne, and Ruleress of the throne of Feridun*. The Mistress, the

* Feridun (Aferidun), seventh king of Persia, of the first

Lavisher of splendour on the sun, and light on the moon; the Empress, the high and mighty Queen of queens.

“ And, moreover, the King of the world, surrounded by the holy band; the Ruler of the crown, of the throne, and of the ensigns. Iskjan-der* and Darius are his slaves. His court is like heaven; his army as the stars. The eternal Heaven must send to so triumphant a ruler many hundreds of years. He himself is yet a youth, and his throne is also young. He is the Light of the heart, the Ruler of the world, the Subduer of towns and fortresses. When the Universe saw the justice of the Padishah of men, it forgot the

dynasty, was a son of Alkian, a descendant of the race of Dzhemshid. He conquered Zohak, a usurper of the Persian crown, and kept him in a cavern of Mount Danavend in safe custody. The day of the famous battle was called by the Persians Mihirdzhan, because it happened just at the beginning of the autumnal equinox, which bears this name in the Persian calendar.

Saadi and Dzhamy glorify in their songs the wisdom and grace of Feridun.

* Alexander of Macedon.

justice of Nushirvan*. When his armies march against the foe, then tremble the Chaff-Mountains† like a clinking glass, and before the sound of the flutes and drums of his armies all things tremble and are greatly afraid. The Ruler of swords, lances, and banners; the King of the kings of the world, &c., &c., that is, the great and commanding Emperor, the Lord of all the Russias, Nicolai Paulowitsh, whose dominion Allah causes to abide through the centuries, and whose greatness He makes eternal. His Majesty sits on the kingly seat of justice, strengthening the foundations of right. He waves the banner on the side of right, and governs gloriously on the throne of righteousness. The peoples of the lands that stand under the protection and sceptre of

* Nushirvan, called also Anurshirvan Ben Cobad, received from the Arabians the surname Kisra, and from the Persians Khosru. It is from this Khosru the First, son of Cobad, a king of the dynasty of the Sassanides, that the dynasty of Khosru is named.

Nushirvan is celebrated by the Persian historians and poets as a prince uniting in himself all the virtues.

† The Caucasus.

such a Lord,* who shows to his subjects his justice and love, who causes the zephyr of his grace and the breath of his mercy to float over all towns, as the wind blows over the bed of roses; in whose train Iskjander goes, and whose warder Darius is, and of whose love of justice all peoples are convinced;—him would we extol in prayer, from a pure heart and without hypocrisy, with the tongues of nightingales, and worthily sing the King, who may be likened to Dzhemshid*, in that his righteous voice makes the Chain of Nushirvan continually tremble; who by his righteousness, like the light of the sun, enlightens this world, which is darkened by the horror of crime: fervently would we pray for the preservation and duration of his life.

“Our prayer now is to the gates of the King

* Dzhemshid, the fourth king of the dynasty of the Pishadians. The proper name of this king is Dzhem; the word shid, which, in the old Persian, signifies the sun, was added to the king's name on account of the great beauty and majesty of his countenance, or, according to others, on account of the splendour of his actions. Dzhemshid is the founder of Persepolis.

of righteousness, and our desire to the Padishah of right, who has joined together and created all parts of this world by his matchless might; who has made of the universe a parasol of bright blue satin; who has adorned the heaven with stars; who has arranged the earth, and sowed it with men and dzhinnis (spirits), and decked it with green adornment, &c., &c.;—to Him we pray for the happiness and prosperity of the lofty Autocrat and his imperial house, for the children of might and greatness, for the proud branches and twigs of the imperial stem. Her Majesty the Empress, the Sun-countenance of the Czarean Constellation, the Eclipser of the bright-beaming Venus, the Enlightener of the Palace of might and happiness; the Sun shining in the heaven of the Czarean Harem, the Mistress of the peoples, the Guardianess of the Czarean fruit-tree laden with the fruits of happiness: Alexandra Feodorovna. We pray for her beaming posterity; for the Heir of the Throne of Dominion, the Son of the King of kings, &c., &c.: the Grand-Prince and Caesare-witsh Alexander Nicolajewitsh.

“Do Thou, O God! prolong his life, and

make his posterity eternal, and preserve in eternal beauty the adorable Grand-Princess, the Glorifier of the Harem of his palace, the Caesarevna Maria Alexandrovna ! And do Thou also preserve the highly-honoured and mighty Lord, dear to us above all by his boundless amiability, the Grand-Duke Michael Paulowitsh, and his noble Spouse. Do Thou also preserve the pure Pearl-ornament, the Jewel of the sea, the Mistress of charm, the Pearly-splendour of the sun, the most precious Pearl in the basket of purity, the noble Lady and Princess Maria Nicolajevna ! Do Thou preserve in eternal splendour the Sun in the Harem of the palace of the Ruler of might, of the great Shahsadé Alexander Nicolajewitsh ! We pray for the Grand-Princess sitting in happiness under the canopy of the Throne, the Palm of light and of highness, Alexandra Alexandrovna ; and the Grand-Princesses Maria, Elizabeth, and Jecaterina Michaelovna, worthy of reverence, honour, fame, and dominion ; and the Lamp enlightening the lofty Hall of Assembly, the glorious Palm of the Czarean garden of the great Shahsadé, the Princess Maria Paulovna ; and

the Rose of the Czarean garden, the Palm of the Czarean flower-bed, the great Shahsadé, the Princess, Queen of the Netherlands, Anna Paulovna, &c., &c.”

In similar superabundant style it goes on for several pages further; but I think the reader has enough in this specimen; the rather, as the old figures and turns are repeated again and again, and the glorifying confusion becomes greater and greater the more it approaches the close. At the close stands written with special skill,—

“To the Ruler of the Worlds, this pure Prayer for the Emperor and the great King of kings, is offered by

“MIRZA ABUL KASSIM,

“Kadi of the Circle of Karabagh.”

* * * * *

I now subjoin the Tartar Hymn composed on occasion of the entrance of the Russians into Erivan, which will have some interest for the reader, as containing a formal description of the conquest of that renowned fortress to which Prince Paskjewitsh is indebted for his surname Erivansky.

TARTAR HYMN ON THE ENTRANCE OF THE
RUSSIANS INTO ERIVAN.

“ I worship the throne and crown of Nicolai Paulowitsh ;
I worship the tribute wrested by him from all kings ;
I worship the aid which the Catholicos Nerses * rendered ;
I worship the mass that was holden by him in Etshmiad-
sin.

Seven days for deliberation were given, and then they
stormed Erivan,
Threw balls and bomb-shells into the town, till houses
and stones were groaning ;
They took Hassan Chan †, and bound him fast, and
covered his face with sorrow—
Then began the struggle among the long-legged Sarbasses ‡;

* Nerses, the present Catholicos of the Armenians, fought
in the war with the Persians, 1825.

† Hassan Chan (Hussein Chan), the Persian governor of
Erivan.

‡ Sarbasses, Persian soldiers.

The Chorassans* gathered round the Melik †, and implored his aid.

The Mushtahids were slain, and no Imamsadé remained ‡.

I worship the throne and crown of Nicolai Paulowitsh,
&c., &c.

They threw balls and bomb-shells on Sardarabad ;
They took the Sarbasses captive, bearded and beardless § ;
Hassan Chan took flight, and the Russians pursued him ;
He entreated Paskjewitsh : Free me for your Cross's sake !

* Chorassans. The Persians dwelling in Erivan are so called, in contradistinction from the native population, which consists of Armenians and Tartars.

† Melik—the Melik Sahak, the Armenian Prince of Erivan, who, on account of his extraordinary endowments, stood in great esteem as well among the Russians as the Persians.

‡ So the descendants of the Prophet were called.

§ The word *beardless*—*thükssüs*—has a double meaning. First, it signifies what it says, and secondly, designates such young people as suffer themselves to become the instruments of sexual abuses. The latter is the general significa-

Who has ever seen a Sardaar like Paskjewitsh ?
He conquered the Shah and the Shahsadé, and spoiled
them and their possessions.

The poor Jussuf who composed this song, what need has
he for the treasures of the world ! ”

CHAPTER III.

THE WISE MAN OF GJANDSHA'S SECOND
AND LAST LOVE.

CONCLUSION OF THE SONGS OF MIRZA-SHAFFY.

YOU still remember that moonlight scene, where, in our nocturnal stroll through the streets of Tiflis, we surprised Mirza-Shaffy singing to a new beauty and tendering her his admiration. This love had taken deeper root in his breast than I had at first imagined; and notwithstanding his assertion, that a lover can make no rational verses, some of his sweetest poems date from that time. To these belong the ghazel contributed in a former chapter, "When the ring of youthful beauties," &c.; likewise the song, "O fling back the tshadra," &c.; and another still unknown to you, which I must here communi-

cate, all the more as it contains a lively description of Hafiza, the second and last love of Mirza-Shaffy.

O how, with swelling rapture,
My heaving heart beats high,
When she, so lightly gliding,
Before me passes by !

Over her shoulders flows
A veil of dazzling white,
Out of her dark eyes goes
A flood of golden light ;
Around her neck her tresses
Luxuriate how brightly !
The silken boddice presses
The rosy bosom tightly.
All lost in admiration,
All lost in love and joy,
In the sweet fascination
My senses captives lie ;
And, with the swelling rapture,
My heaving heart beats high,
When she, so lightly gliding,
Before me passes by !

Bloom daffodils and roses
On robe of heavenly blue ;
Beneath, the silken trousers
Flash forth a fiery hue :
The little, tender feet,
The hands so soft and small,
The ruby mouth so sweet,
The charms delicious all !
O how, with swelling rapture,
My heaving heart beats high,
When she, so lightly gliding,
Before me passes by !

* * * *

Only when my wise teacher was in a particularly good humour, excited by wine and familiar conversation, did I now and then succeed in enticing from him such a song ; on other occasions it was strange how carefully he always endeavoured to avoid bringing the discourse to his Hafiza. I could not for a long time find the key to the solution of this mystery, but at last an accident brought me upon it.

I had one day extended my walk somewhat longer than usual, and, on my return, found

Mirza-Shaffy already waiting for me in the Divan of Wisdom. To while away the time, he had taken out his kalem-dan, and written some verses upon a piece of paper lying on the table, a practice in which he was wont to indulge on such occasions, with the difference only, that at other times he quietly let his verses lie, or only took them up for the purpose of exposition or illustration, whilst this time he hastily put the paper in his pocket, as soon as he perceived my approach. I pretended to take no notice, and on my going into the open room adjoining, to dress, he began to sing a song of Hafiz :—

- “ When the fragrance, maiden, of thy locks
Is borne by the winds to Hafiz’ tomb,
From his silent grave a thousand flowers
In beauty shall spring and bloom ! ”

“ What shall we begin to-day, O Mirza-Shaffy ? ” I inquired, after I had brought the wine and drunk to him.

- He tapped his tshibuq out, and answered,

“Take paper and kalem in hand; I will sing to thee some ghazels of Fizuli.”

He sang and I wrote :—

“Through the gloom of death, O my life, thy love bore me,
To the joy of a new, brighter life to restore me!

I sought for a jewel with loving endeavour,
And destiny opened a mine before me!

An ant, far and wide, I wandered weary,
And the palace of Solomon rose up o'er me!

Like a waterdrop floated along to the ocean,
Come I, poor Fizuli, to thee, my sweet glory!”

“The sense of the ghazel would please me better,” said I, “if thy name, O Wise Man, instead of Fizuli’s were contained in the concluding distich.”

“Wilt thou hear songs from me? I will sing to thee.”

“Thy songs I always gladly hear; but the

meaning of my words was this time different. I did not mean I would rather that thou wert the author of the song, but that the sense of its words were applicable to thee."

Mirza-Shaffy looked at me with a mixture of surprise and perplexity.

"Thou must not be angry, O Wise Man!" I continued, "because I cast the glance of curiosity into the recesses of thy heart. It is friendship and sympathy for thee that urges me to it. I know thou art in love; thou thyself hast told me so. And if thou hadst not, I should have guessed it, according to what the proverb says, 'Musk and love cannot remain concealed.' Thou hast also confessed to me that this love is no idle and common love; no scentless tulip, that the softest wind moves hither and thither: but a strong rose-tree, that has struck deep root, and is of good odour. It is the quality of roses to bloom and be fragrant, and the nature of lovers to be merry and joyous. But thou art sad, O Mirza-Shaffy! and that gives me pain. Thou art sad, though thou seekest to hide it under drinking and singing. I should

like to know the cause of thy sadness ; perhaps I could help thee. But thou coverest thy heart with the veil of secrecy ; even thy songs thou hidest from me !” and I pointed to the pocket wherein he had concealed the written paper.

Mirza-Shaffy sank awhile into deep musing ; blew, as customary in such cases, the smoke of his tshibug in longer whiffs before him ; drank off two glasses of wine ; and then held out to me the written leaf, with the words, “ There, read it ! and I will tell thee all that I have on my heart, if thou wilt hear it ! ”

I first took the paper to see what was written on it, and found two hastily thrown-off songs, superscribed, Hafiza.

The first ran :—

“ Bud of Beauty ! bow to me,
Grant me what I ask of thee,
I will cherish thee every hour ;
Till all thy charms,
In my loving arms,
Unfold to the perfect flower ! ”

The second had apparently no internal con-

nection with the first, but still was written in the same train of thought. Here it follows :—

“ Why, how now, thou mad heart,
 That complain'st so dejected,
 Thou bewailest the smart
 Thou thyself hast inflicted !
 Thou despair'st in the sadness,
 Yet returnest to be sad—
 And I know and feel thy madness,
 And 't is my heart is so mad ! ”

* * * *

“ Thou knowest,” said Mirza-Shaffy, beginning his narration, “ that Hafiza's father had, at the very first, given me distinctly to understand that he would not hear of my attachment before I had given full assurance of being in a competent position to provide for the maintenance of a family.”

“ How often must I repeat to thee,” said I, interrupting the Wise Man, “ that this would very easily be attained if thou wouldst follow my advice, and accept a situation as teacher of the Tartar language at the Gymnasium ! ”

“If that could be, I would soon submit to it, out of love to Hafiza ; but—it cannot be !”

“Then it is thy own fault ! I spoke to the Director Kulzhinsky only two days ago, and heard from his own mouth that all difficulties would easily be obviated if thou wouldst only be in earnest.”

“Have I not done all I could ? Have I not done violence to my tongue, in speaking, and in keeping silence ? Have I not pilgrimaged from house to house like a Fakir, with the countenance of humility ? Have I not given in petitions quite according to thy direction ? But now I have been sitting these two months on the carpet of expectation, and am no wiser than before.”

“Hast thou, then, received no definite answer ?”

“Answers enough. It always seemed as if they were nodding to me with the look of compliance ; but my hopes were put off from one day to another. At last, when I thought I was entering from the forecourt of doubt into the gate of certainty, I received a great letter, of which I understood not a word. In the illusion that it was the confirmatory notice of my appointment,

I hastened with it to my mediator *, and requested him forthwith to hasten on the consummation : this letter would be a better security for Hafiza's father than a show of the greatest wealth. The mediator took the document, and executed my commission. Who shall describe my astonishment, when, two days thereafter, he came to me with the look of anger, and reviled me with bitter words, declaring that I had deceived him with my discourse ! ”

“ How was that ? ”

“ Hafiza's father, understanding Russian as little as I, thought fit, before he entered into further negotiations, to send the writing to the Mufti, and obtain from the latter a Fetva (judgment), whether the writing contained a satisfactory statement as to my pecuniary resources. The answer was in the negative.”

* Among the Tartars, as among the Georgians and Armenians, courtships are always conducted by mediators. Application is made by an elderly man to the father, and by an elderly woman to the mother of the bride, to introduce the necessary particulars.

“How was the Fetva drawn up?”

“Like all others. There exists a prescribed form for the purpose, which the Mufti is only required to fill up; and this is generally done with a single word. The mediator brought me a copy of the Fetva, and”

“Canst thou,” said I, interrupting my teacher again, “tell me the literal contents of it?”

“How should I not! but I will rather show thee it as it is; I have it with me.”

And from a number of sheets of tissue-paper rolled together, which he always carried with him, the Wise Man produced the Fetva, which was drawn up in the following style:—

“Help comes from God!

Inquiry:

Does this Russian Writing give sufficient information concerning Mirza-Shaffy’s pecuniary resources?

Answer:

No! God knows best.

Written by the poor

Mullah-Hadshi-Jussuf,

Whom God forgive.”

“Hafiza’s father,” continued Mirza-Shaffy, “now caused, in his wrath, a complete translation of the Russian writing to be made, from which he discovered, with no slight amazement, that it was nothing but a summons from the Director Kulzhinsky to me, to appear the next Thursday, at 5 o’clock in the afternoon, at the Gymnasium, for the purpose of undergoing an examination in the Tartar language.”

Here the Wise Man paused a moment, and took a potent draught from the glass to quench the fire of his indignation. He was evidently overpowered by the remembrances which, by his narrative, rose vividly again before him. Especially obnoxious to him seemed the idea that it could have been expected of *him* to submit himself to be examined, and, above all, in a Russian Gymnasium ! This thought for the moment crowded all the rest into the background. Mirza-Shaffy, the first Wise Man of the East, the pride of his race, the Ruler in the realm of Beauty, the Pearl in the shell of Poetry—to submit himself to be examined in his own language !

I comprehended at once the glow of anger that

reddened his countenance, the flood of emotions that billowed through his breast. I felt impelled to drop balm into his wounds.

“Do they also ask of the sun,” I exclaimed, “whether it shines? or of the rose, whether it is fragrant? and is it not just as foolish a procedure, to direct the question of doubt at Mirza-Shaffy, whether he is wise? or to wish to prove him in his wisdom? But as little as the sun grows dim when a fool presumes to doubt of its brightness, so little needest thou be provoked when fools make a doubt of thy wisdom! Hast thou not thyself sung—

“ ‘ In love’s delights forget thy woes,
In thy sweet songs that never fail!
And take a lesson from the rose,
A lesson from the nightingale :

Even the rose, the pride of flowers,
Without the rank soil cannot flourish;
And bülbül too, the joy of bowers,
Herself on crawling worms must nourish !’

“Sing me a song of thy Hafiza; *that* will put

thee in a better mood. Afterwards thou shalt tell me, as we drink our wine, the rest of thy story."

My words did not fail in their impression on the Wise Man. He drank an "Allahwerdy" to me, set down his tshibuq by his side, let fall his leg from the divan, and began to sing—

"When, to receive the pious dead, the portals
Of Paradise hereafter open stand;
And there, before them, all the tribes of mortals
Assembled wait, a various, anxious band;

Then I alone, of all the new immortals,
Exempt from fear, and full of hope, shall stand,
Since to me, here on earth, through thee the portals
Of Paradise already open stand!"

He smiled complacently as I lavished upon him praise for his poem. Rejoiced at the good effect of my counsel, I said to him, "Seest thou, Mirza-Shaffy, what a happy man thou art? The mere thought of thy love cheers thee up. How happy wilt thou only be in the full

possession of the beloved ! Is not Nechshebi right, when he sings that Love must be the fairest thing on earth, inasmuch as prince and dervish are alike its subjects ?”

“ But Nechshebi has also said,” replied Mirza-Shaffy, “ a man without money is without respect, and a house without money is desolate ! Shall I bring love into a desolate house ? Once it never occurred to me to think of such things ; but now the thought often makes me sad.”

“ Leave complaint,” I cried, “ O Mirza-Shaffy ! All will yet turn out well ; the slight mistake of the Russian paper has in no way damaged the affair itself. Having once resolved to sacrifice thy freedom out of love for Hafiza, thou must remain faithful to thy resolution. I see no serious reason why thou shouldst not obtain the situation at the Gymnasium.”

“ But the examination ?”

“ Will be dispensed with. It would be too foolish to call thy wisdom in question. It is a law among the Moscov that every teacher who enters into the service of the Government must previously undergo an examination, inasmuch as

here fools are many and wise men few. The law is, therefore, well founded, but they will make an exception of thee."

"They would make an exception if, instead of my songs in praise of wine and beauty, I had written long prayers full of illusion and hypocrisy, like Mirza-Abul-Kassim, the Kadi of Karabagh. Snakes alone succeed in winding themselves through everywhere !"

Only after I had enticed from the Wise Man, by questions of all kinds, the rest of his story, did I comprehend how it happened that, in spite of my consoling exhortations, in spite of drinking and singing, there was still a remnant of bitterness left behind in him. The father of Hafiza, namely, in his message to Mirza-Shaffy, had, with especial severity, given prominence to the point that no doubt his wisdom was just as questionable as his means, since even the Moscov deemed it necessary to subject him to a previous examination.

Deeply mortifying as it was for Mirza-Shaffy to have it believed in Hafiza's house that, by the transmission of the Russian letter, he had willed

to commit a manifest fraud, it went yet deeper still to his heart that his wisdom was called in question.

“Dost thou think, then,” I asked him, “that Hafiza will love thee less?”

“No!”

“Or dost thou fear her mother?”

“No; the mother is just as much in love with my songs as the daughter with me.”

“Then why wilt thou any longer indulge misgivings? We shall soon come over the covetous old father, when thou art once in office and dignity, and hast the means of making ready the marriage-chamber. The removal of the difficulties of the examination shall be my care.”

I was in good earnest with what I said, having no doubt that, by a little friendly conference with the chief authority at the school, a way of accommodation would be found, to satisfy the rigour of the law, without bending the pride of the Wise Man.

Finally, too, I succeeded in bringing my enamoured teacher to so perfect a composure on all points, that at last he played off witticisms on

himself, and remained with me till late in the evening.

“It is, though,” he exclaimed, smiling, “just as if my wisdom were gone out for a walk in the dusk of the evening! I came to teach wisdom, and have had to learn wisdom. One might be angry with women for turning the heads of those most who are most attached to them, if they were not altogether too lovely a race. Their understanding grows with love, ours diminishes:

“How great thine understanding was, Mirza-Shaffy!

It scarcely in thy head found room to be!

And yet how small was that white hand that stole from thee

Both heart and understanding, O Mirza-Shaffy!”

“These are the contradictions of love,” I interjected; “a great hand would hardly have carried off thy heart!”

“Thou speakest wisely!” rejoined he, smirkingly; “but we must not perplex ourselves too much about the contradictions in love; the heart suffers beneath it, and the understanding sinks

nothing thereby. Love brings heart and understanding to continual contradiction. The heart sees in love the greatest blessedness, and the understanding sees therein the greatest torment on earth. And yet it is only love that makes men men."

"An old wise man of my race," added I, "has a similar thought:—

" 'Wer ohne Weiber *könnte* sein,
 Wär frei von vielen Beschwerden—
 Wer ohne Weiber *wollte* sein,
 Wär nicht viel Nütz auf Erden ! ' "

He expressed his high satisfaction with the wisdom of the saying, sipped down a glass of wine, and was making ready to go, when I held him back with the words:—"Mirza-Shaffy ! Thou knowest what a lively interest I take in thy love, and yet thou hast not so much as told me how it came to pass that thou becamest acquainted with Hafiza !"

"What is there to tell of that ?"

"All that I can tell of it is, I am fond of her."

such things, even to the slightest circumstance. Light thee another tshibuq, and spin away thy story in all comfort over the glass of wine."

"It will not be a long one," said the Wise Man of Gjändsha :—

"We saw one another, we loved, we chose :
What more or sweeter can I disclose ?"

"I should like to know," I rejoined, "how thou camest to see Hafiza, to love her, and to choose her."

"That is quite simple. Thou hast been the way to my house, and knowest what streets there are to go through in order to reach it. Thou knowest, also, that every evening in the moonlight the maidens linger on the roofs, and amuse themselves with dancing, conversation, and singing. In the first cross-street through which the way leads, when thou hast left the houses of the Armenians and Russians behind, a lovely being, of tall stature, had for some time attracted my looks. I saw the charming creature

I told thee the story of Zuléikha ; and although my heart was overflowing with the melancholy remembrance of my youthful love, yet so enchanted was I with the beauty of the slender maiden on the roof, that I could not help casting on her the look of admiration. For a short while she pretended not to observe me. But when I stopped, and took off my cap to cool my head a little—for with the narrating, and the drinking, and the walking, I had become very hot—she suddenly vanished from the roof. Heavy in head and heart, I went home and laid me down. But I could find no rest the whole night. When at last I fell asleep for about a quarter of an hour, Zuléikha appeared to me in a dream. But her image was soon displaced by the beautiful maiden on the roof, in the cross-street. Then I awakened suddenly, and tossed about uneasily on my couch, and reproached myself on account of my dream, as if I were to blame for it. On the following morning I said to myself: ‘Mirza-Shaffy, be clear to thyself in what thou doest ! Thou hast lived long years in repose and wisdom, and hast stretched thy

limbs on the carpet of carelessness: wilt thou once more embark on the stormy sea of love, notwithstanding all the bitter experiences of the past? Or wilt thou continue to lead a tranquil life?' I determined on the latter, and when I came to thee again to instruct thee, I avoided the way through the cross-street. I did the same on returning to my dwelling. Notwithstanding, I spent the night still more unquietly than before. And on the following morning I said to myself: 'Mirza-Shaffy, why wilt thou cover thy heart with the veil of delusion? Thou art in love. When a house is burning, and men do not hasten to quench it, then will the flames destroy it. But with the heart it is the reverse. Here no water can quench. When a heart has taken fire, it only finds safety when it succeeds in kindling another heart besides. Therefore do what destiny prescribes to thee!' And I did so. Above all, I longed to see the figure of the lovely maiden once by daylight, in order to be convinced that the moonshine had not deceived me. Several days went by before I reached the fulfilment of my wishes. But towards the close of the fourth

day, I was fortunate enough to descry the beautiful maiden on the roof. She looked about her on all sides, but there was nobody to be seen on the roofs around, and in the street all was still, as is usual in the afternoon before the men return home from the Bazaar.

“ I placed myself opposite the house, in such a manner that I could see the whole of the gorgeous figure, from the little feet up to the fairy head with its waving locks. And she was not terrified at me, as maidens are otherwise wont to be at the sight of men; but she unveiled her countenance, and looked so smilingly down upon me out of her beaming eyes, that my heart ran over with warm bliss and rapture; for she seemed to me by day in the sunshine yet more beautiful than in the moonlight. Happiness makes a moment eternity, and eternity a moment. Therefore I know not how long I stood there, lost in gazing on the glorious maiden; I only know that I stood as long as I could see her. Like a vision she had risen before me—like a vision she suddenly vanished. I replaced my cap .

“Then thou must have shown thy white head again!” I interjected.

“Aired it a little, because I was very hot,” replied he, smirkingly; “and only as I went homewards did I perceive that the streets had become busier. Probably this had been the cause of the disappearance of my beauty. I was as a drunken man, and all things rolled before my eyes. Yea, I knew not certainly whether I was awake or asleep, and pinched myself on the leg and arm to convince myself that I was really awake. For just as the maiden had appeared to me on the roof, had I seen her in my dream:—

“Upon me there so gloriously
Her beautiful eyes did beam,
The dream was now a reality,
The reality now a dream!

“‘Be clear to thyself, O Mirza-Shaffy!’ said I; ‘if the long, soulful look of the damsel were meant for thee, then mayst thou cast on her the

then would it be a folly longer to burn thy heart in the fire of her countenance !' In order to ascertain the truth, I wrote a fragrant song, with the intention of singing it to her on the first opportunity, or, if obstacles should interpose in the way of this design, of folding it round the twig of an almond-tree, and throwing it to her on the roof."

"If thou knowest the fragrant song by heart, O Mirza-Shaffy, sing it to me !"

The Wise Man immediately began to sing:—

"Thine eyes, by one sweet moment's glance,
Have wrought so bright a charm for me—
A shining wonder, 't will entrance
For evermore my destiny.

So mayst thou listen graciously,
And answer this request of mine :
If that sweet look were meant for me,
Wilt thou, fair maid, give me a sign ?

If I may share thy blissful fate,
And if my arm may clasp thee round :
O, then my heart shall jubilate,
And like my joy shall nought be found !

Then on through all the years of time,
Through changes sweet of night and day,
My destiny shall roll sublime,
Along its wonder-shining way !

“ Soon after,” continued Mirza-Shaffy, “ I succeeded in obtaining a favourable opportunity of singing to her the song. But scarcely had I got half through it, when we were disturbed by the appearance of female forms on the neighbouring roofs. My Beauty looked round her alarmed, and then gave me a sign to go. I followed the wave of her hand, but first threw my carefully-written question-flower at her feet, and, in going away, had the joy of seeing that she took up the almond-twigg, around which the fine paper was wound with red thread, and immediately vanished. She was in the possession of my song, and that was sufficient to make me sure of a favourable result ! Yet how I wished she could have heard me sing the song, and told me all I longed to know !

“ On the following evening I appeared again at the accustomed hour. The beautiful maiden sat with veiled countenance on the roof, but

turned quickly round, as soon as she perceived me from a distance. I went slowly by the house, peering up with stray glances, but she looked not down to me. Suddenly from behind the house there came walking towards me a tall old woman, who whispered with rough voice the words, ‘Follow me, Mirza-Shaffy, at a distance!’ She knew my name; who could it be but a messenger from my Beauty? I followed as she had signified, and after a short time she stopped before a little solitary sakli, whose roof was scarcely the height of a man above the earth. There she stole in, after having looked round once more to beckon me on. I crept after her into the poorly-furnished, scantily-lighted sakli; two pretty children, girls of about ten or twelve years of age, who were sitting on a mat, and occupied with female handiwork, received instructions to go on the roof to enjoy the fresh air; and I remained alone with the old woman.

“‘Mirza-Shaffy!’ she began, ‘what wilt thou give me, if I announce to thee good news? On my lips hangs thy destiny!’

“ I gave her all I had about me ; but promised her more for time to come. And now she told me what I already guessed, that Hafiza (that was the name of the beautiful maiden) had cast the look of satisfaction on me and my song. At the same time, however, I learned that it would be difficult to attain to the possession of Hafiza ; her father, a covetous old merchant, having already refused several suitors, because he required too great a *käbin* (purchase-price) for his daughter.

“ There would be no end of relating, were I to repeat to thee all that further passed between me and the loquacious old woman. She had a great desire to divide her message into two parts, and to appoint me the following evening again, so as to be sure of a double recompense ; but I succeeded, by coaxing words and promises, to draw out of her all she knew. In particular, I concerted with the old woman a plan, to which, after long resistance, and the promise of a considerable sum to be paid by me before the execution of the plan, she assented. All the money I had scarcely sufficed to satisfy her demands ;

but what sacrifices will not one offer to love! Our plan went to the extent of dressing me in female attire; for which the old woman, who almost matched me in stature, was to find the needful materials. On the following evening, the whole was carried into effect; and so complete was my disguise, that, on the way to Hafiza's house, I was twice accosted by amorous men."

"But did not thy beard betray thee?"

"I had so concealed my countenance, in the manner of Turkish women, with the kerchief of modesty, that only my eyes were visible. Besides the kerchief I also wore a veil, and the white tshadra enveloped my whole body; so that to young and old I must have appeared, in my array, a pattern of strict propriety and maidenly bashfulness. In this manner I was able to discourse with Hafiza, every evening, without exciting the least suspicion. Her love grew with my visits and my songs, and we spent many blissful hours together, until by chance her mother came into the secret. She had heard me talking with Hafiza, and the sound of my voice had awakened her mistrust. My tall figure, also, added to this,

and her curiosity impelled her, secretly, to watch our conversation. The terrified Hafiza, on being interrogated by her mother, attempted no denial and now there ensued a scene of lamentation which I will not renew in remembrance. All would have been lost if maternal love had not gained the victory. The tears of the daughter, the protestations of her ardent love for me, and, at last, my own poems, touched the heart of the mother; for in one of my songs I had said, 'The woman who bore Hafiza must be herself a Peri in grace and dignity, deserving that all the queens of the world should be her slaves. The lap from which this rose had sprouted was comparable to the sweetest flower-bed, and her bosom consisted of twins of the full moon.' When the mother read these verses her hatred changed into friendship for me, and she herself thenceforward favoured my suit for the hand of her daughter. I had now to seek a mediator to conduct my interest with the father in soliciting the hand of Hafiza. But the old man had no more taste for me than for my poetry; and the proposal would have met with a flat refusal had not the mother

VOL. II.

interposed her weighty word. The marriage would long since have been consummated had I been in a position to raise the required käbin, and to give a satisfactory account of my pecuniary ability. Then came the unfortunate affair of the Russian letter. The Mufti's Fetva gave the father occasion to inquire of the Mush-tahid, and the Mullahs more particularly, about me. Thou canst imagine what opinion these pillars of faith have of me! Their judgment would be more favourable if I wrote prayers like Mirza-Abul-Kassim, of Karabagh. The rest thou knowest."

* * * * *

So far Mirza-Shaffy. Shortly afterwards I had to take my leave of Tiflis; but I departed with the well-grounded hope that, in consequence of the intercession of influential friends, the Wise Man of Gjändsha was nearer the goal of his wishes than he himself believed.

At Constantinople I received a short epistle from him, wherein he sent me word that he had obtained a good situation, not at the Gymnasium,

but at the Garrison-school; and from other sources I learned that he applied himself to his duties with great conscientiousness.

Soon after my return home I received another letter from Mirza-Shaffy, wherein he announced to me the tidings that he had happily ascended the mount of bliss; Hafiza's father having died of bilious fever. The words of his letter beamed with the purest joy. My congratulatory reply, as well as two subsequent letters to the Wise Man, failed, in all probability, to reach the place of their destination, inasmuch as I received no answer to them. A long sojourn in Italy completely crowded the remembrances of the Caucasus and its inhabitants into the background. So, then, I remained without any further news of Mirza-Shaffy, until a few weeks ago, through the kindness of a traveller with whom I was previously acquainted, I received a packet of letters from other friends at Tiflis, wherein agreeable mention is made of the Wise Man of Gjändsha. Let me here be indulged with communicating a passage or two from these, containing references to the first part of this work:—

*Extracts from a Letter dated Tiflis,
July, 1850.*

——“Your ‘Thousand and One Days’ has fortunately arrived at Tiflis, in two copies, one of which found its way through Petersburg, the other through Constantinople. You may think with what curiosity we flew through the book, whose contents for the most part are drawn from materials so nearly concerning ourselves.

——“How would the good Mirza-Shaffy have rejoiced himself, had he seen his figure in the frontispiece, and convinced himself with his own eyes how many of his fragrant songs are arrayed in the dress of the Evening-land! But a long time will probably yet elapse ere the book reaches his hands; the copy destined for him having first to make its round among those of your acquaintance here who understand German. But, perhaps, you will be surprised to hear that your wise teacher no longer dwells at Tiflis, having left it two years ago; otherwise you would not reproach me in your letter with neglecting for so long a time to impart any news of him to you. Mirza-

Shaffy, after having, as teacher at the Garrison-school, acquired in a high degree the satisfaction of his superiors, has been removed, with increase of salary, to the newly-established Musselman-school at Gjändsha; and, with this delightful return to the town of his birth and of his first love, has reached the summit of his wishes. He is said to lead an extremely happy life with his fair Hafiza, and was, when I last heard of him, already blessed with two children, a boy and a girl. Were I to tell you of all the changes which have taken place here since your departure, I should have to write a special commentary to every page of your book; nay, I do not exaggerate when I say, that, in these few years, pretty nearly everything has been altered here.—houses, inhabitants, and circumstances. And, true to nature as your descriptions are, compared with the city as it was at the time of your residence in it, they, nevertheless, require many supplementary sketches, to give a perfectly just conception of Tiflis at the present day.

“ You know that since the times of the old Yermolov, who gave the city its first European aspect,

the Sardaar's Palace had only formed a house of accommodation for Russian generals of celebrity, who came hither to lose their celebrity in battle with the Circassians, and, after a year or two, under some pretext or other, again to be recalled.

“These generals (among whom, indeed, were to be found better men than the mighty War-Minister who disposes of their destiny), in the accumulation of their duties, and in their too great dependance on Petersburg, had neither time nor inclination to embark in magnanimous enterprises; they wanted, moreover, the requisite means.

“It is quite another thing with the present Governor of the Caucasus; who, by his rank, by his enormous wealth, and especially by his friendship with the Emperor, is himself too powerful to be dependent on the caprices of the infirm old Tshernitshev.

“Prince Woronzov rules in the Caucasus with royal plenipotence; and his love of splendour impels him, and his means allow him, to give to the city of his residence a royal appearance. Thus it is easily explained that, during the six years' rule of Woronzov, more has been done for

the embellishment of Tiflis, than during the rule of all his predecessors, up to Yermolov, taken together. Whole rows of gloomy saklis of the Georgians and Tartars are cleared off, and have given place to comfortable houses, in part to actual palaces. One of the quarters of the city, Kuki, where the inhabitants, even in your time, lived like Troglodytes, has been entirely rebuilt, and thereby the communication between the city and the German colony restored. Between Naphtluk and Tiflis proper, Prince Woronzov has laid out a magnificent model-garden. Behind the house of the former deputy Governor-general Hurko (Alexander-place), bridges have been built over the Kura, and new baths erected.

“In the middle of the Erivan-square, the building of a really gorgeous theatre is at this moment being completed; its projector being the rich Armenian, Gabriel Tamamshev.

“Opposite the Russian churchyard the Armenian Sumbatov has had a large house built, which is now occupied by Begmen-Mirza (brother of the late Shah of Persia, and formerly Governor of

Azerbéidzhan), whose harem incloses a paragon-assemblage of Oriental Beauties.

“ On the mountains of Katshori (about an hour’s walk from Tiflis, in the direction of Priutina), which, on account of their salubrious air, are so excellently adapted for summer-residences, Prince Woronzov has gratuitously caused a distribution of lands to be made for country-houses and garden-grounds, without imposing on the enterprisers any other obligation than that of completing the buildings within three years.

“ The great Manège has been changed, since 1846, into a provisory theatre, for the performance of Russian and Ukrainian operas.

“ These are only the chief of the many alterations in the houses and general aspect of the city. Were I to relate to you in like manner the changes that have occurred among distinguished persons, I should not know where to begin, and where to end. Almost the whole of the higher military and official personnel has been changed.

“ Abbas-Kuli-Chan of Baku, the poetical Tartar prince of whom you make mention in the ‘ School of Wisdom,’ died on a pilgrimage to Mecca, after

having previously undertaken a journey to Teheran, and been received, both by the Shah and the Sultan, with great demonstrations of honour. His brother still lives in the Caucasus, as General in the Russian service.

“The young princess Nassinka Orbeljanov has completely divested herself of her Georgian manners and costume which so well became her, and whereby she fascinated so many hearts, and is now lady of honour to the Empress of Russia.

“The ‘Rose of the Caucasus’ has long since left Tiflis.

“One of the mysterious Poles of your book, Thaddæus Lada-Zablocki, is dead; deeply mourned by his friends, so far as, in a country where death holds a continual revel, one is capable of mourning deeply over a victim more or less. After Lermontov, he was the last Slavic poet in the Caucasus. Since his death, a young comrade of his, of the same race, Jacob Polonski, has signaled himself at Tiflis; he edits the *Caucasian Gazette*, and writes very pretty Russian poems in the Oriental style.

“The little General Shramm has been released

from his post as Curator of the Caucasian Instruction institutions; and State-counsellor Simonov, your travelling companion on the Black Sea, has entered into his place.

“Mirza-Jussuf, the Wise Man of Bagdad, has run away with a beautiful Georgian girl.”

ASKOLDOVA MOGILA.

(PENDANT AND CONCLUSION.)

WITH an epic poem from the Russian the first part of this work began—with a dramatic poem from the Russian the second part shall end.

The opera, which I bring before the reader here in careful translation, is become so popular in Russia, so naturalized in town and village, in palace and isba, that, even down to the poorest bondmen, few Russians can be found who do not know whole passages of it by heart.

The many songs occurring in it are for the most part taken from the old national poetry of Russia, and thereby a new national poetry has arisen. The material, too, of the whole is borrowed from the olden times, whilst the unexampled success of this opera furnishes matter for a new page of Russian history.

For a part of its great popularity the poetry of Sagoskin is certainly indebted to the many pretty melodies* it contains; yet I think I do no injustice to the composer when I set the poetical over the musical worth of the piece.

The translation dates from the time of my residence in Moscow, where I saw "Askoldova Mogila" performed so often, and always with new pleasure, and wherever I went heard passages of it sung, that a positive necessity was laid upon me to write the piece down in German, as it were to get rid of it. The file was afterwards carefully applied, and the translation so adapted to the original in verse and rhyme, that the German text may, without much difficulty, be sung to the Russian music.

Independently, however, of the musical side, "Askoldova Mogila" will contribute not a little to familiarize the reader with the manners and customs and national peculiarities of the Russians.

* The music of "Askoldova Mogila" is by Werstovsky, and may easily be obtained, through any music-warehouse, from Petersburg.

ASKOLDOVA MOGILA:

I. E.

ASKOLD'S GRAVE.

A ROMANTIC OPERA, IN FOUR ACTS.

FROM THE RUSSIAN OF SAGOSKIN.

PERSONS *.

THE UNKNOWN.

TAROPKA† GOLOWAN, *Minstrel.*

WSZESZLAV *Page of the Prince.*

ALEXEI *an old Fisherman.*

NADJEZHDA . . . *his Daughter.*

WUISHATTA . . . *Major Domo of the Prince.*

FRELAFF *Warägian Warrior.*

STEMID *Esquire of the Prince.*

PROSTAN *in the service of the Prince.*

JAKUN

IKMOR

RUALD

ERICK

ARNULF

} *Warriors of the Warägian Army.*

* In the orthography of the names I have endeavoured to approach, as near as possible, to the Moscovitish pronunciation.

† Taropka is the diminutive of Tarop. Another diminutive of this name is Tarapushka.

OSTROMIR *Falconer of the Prince.*

FENKAL *Warägian Skald.*

WACHRAMEJEVNA . *Witch of Kiev.*

SSADKO

JURKA

PLENKO

TSHURILA

} *in the service of the Prince at
Prediszlavina.*

AN OLD WOMAN.

BUSZLAJEVNA . . . *Inspectress.*

A WATCHMAN.

First

Second

} *Fishermen.*

Men and Women of Kiev.

Slavonian and Warägian Warriors of Prince Sswjätoszlav.

Male and Female Servants in the Village of Prediszlavina.

Fishermen.

CHORUS of Infernal Spirits.

FIRST ACT.

Morning Twilight. Wild region on the bank of the Dnjepr, occupying a great part of the background. In the distance, on the mountain-side of the river, picturesque hills, scattered over with houses, from the midst of which the Grand Duke's Castle, with its lofty balconies, rises conspicuous. To the right of the spectators a fisherman's hut, with sheds. Round about are fish-nets outspread.*

SCENE I.

NADJEZHDA (*coming from the hut*).

Already the sun breaks forth, and still the beloved is not come!—How clear the heaven is! How fresh and cool the air! O, how glorious is

* In the Russian, *terem*; so the old Russians styled the balcony-chambers where the women lived. The word *terem* is perhaps connected with harem.

God's world! Hush! what rustles there in the bushes? Could that be Wszezslav? Ah, no!

AIR.

Where art thou, O mine eye's delight,
Wszezslav, my sweet faithful friend;
Wszezslav, my soul's beloved?
Tarry not, make haste to rejoice me!
Together, each day we hail
The going-forth of the sun,
And listen by the broad Dnjepr,
To the clear notes of the nightingales.
But thou comest not—I wait in vain—
My heart is melting away with sorrow!
Come, come, thou delight of my eyes!
Tarry not, make haste to rejoice me!
In thee is all my joy,
In thee alone is all my bliss!
Come, come, let me no longer wait,
Wszezslav, my sweet faithful friend!

But see, I believe—O, how my heart beats!
Yes, yes—it is he—it is Wszezslav!

SCENE II.

NADJEZHDA. WSZESZLAV.

NADJEZHDA (*going to meet him*).

Why hast thou come so late to-day, my love?
I have waited and waited!

WSZESZLAV.

Forgive me, Nadjézhda! I should have been here long since, but on the bank of the Dnjepr an unknown man met me. Ah! if thou knewest all this mysterious stranger has babbled to me! Even now the blood boils in my veins! He told me——but I have sworn to be silent upon it.

NADJEZHDA.

O my friend! Thy words affright me!

WSZESZLAV.

Be not afraid, Nadjézhda! the secret I shall learn to-day makes me, the homeless orphan, perhaps, the most fortunate man in the world. But what of all that! I am with thee, to whom I

belong; thy God will also be my God; what more is left me to wish for?

NADJEZHDA.

Yes, Wszezslav; soon will all Christians know thee as their brother, but I as my husband and lord. Already thou art no longer a heathen*. Thou prayest together with us, and lovest thy gods no more. Thou wilt dwell with us, Wszezslav, wilt thou not, in this hut? Here it is so pleasant—so merry! But why art thou silent, looking so fixedly at me?

WSZESZLAV.

And whither should I turn my eyes, if not to thee, my priceless, lovely maiden?

NADJEZHDA.

Whither? Seest thou not the snow-white fragrant May-flowers in the green meadows?

* The Russian word (*Jasütshnik*) signifies at once heathen, linguist, and slanderer.

WSZESZLAV

Thou art a hundred times whiter than they,
my soul's delight!

NADJEZHDA.

But look there in the field, what bright rasp-
berry blossoms!

WSZESZLAV.

Thy bright red lips are lovelier than they!

NADJEZHDA.

But this clear, light-blue heaven?

WSZESZLAV.

Is duller than thy blue eyes, my sweet!

NADJEZHDA.

Now, leave off praising me so, Wszezslav. In
truth I am ashamed.

WSZESZLAV.

Thou blushest!—Blush, my rapture! O, how
beautiful thou art, Nadjézhda! When thou

speakest, it sounds like the cooing of the turtle-dove; and when thou smilest, methinks it is the sun-light!—Yes, look at me, joy of my days!—Speak, dost thou love me?

NADJEZHDA.

Love thee? O Wszezslav, Wszezslav! Thou canst yet ask me that!

SCENE III.

THE SAME. ALEXEI.

ALEXEI (*stepping from the hut*).

Good morning, children!

WSZESZLAV.

How fares it, good Alexéi?

ALEXEI.

God be praised, my son, tolerably well, so long as the Lord has patience with our sins. I thought, Nadjézhda, thou wert long since gone

NADJEZHDA.

I have waited for him, dear father; he will accompany me.

WSZESZLAV.

Yes, Alexéi, I will accompany her; it is some distance from here.

ALEXEI.

Some distance, certainly—right up to the Kutshinishian Mountains. Thou wilt spend the whole day with thy godmother, Nadjézhda; but beware of going into the street—to-day all Kiev is as if mad.

WSZESZLAV.

Indeed! To-day, I believe, is the feast of Uszlad*.

ALEXEI.

It is so. Be quick on the way, before the people and soldiers assemble behind the town, to

* Uszlad, the God of Joy among the old Slavonians.

abandon themselves to their wild delights and amusements.

WSZESZLAV.

Farewell, Alexéi! Come Nadjézhda!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

ALEXEI (*and soon afterwards Fishermen*).

Poor Kievers! How long will ye in your blindness yet worship lifeless idols? All this day ye will provoke the Lord; but we Christians will pray to Him all night, that He would enlighten your souls with the light of the true faith! Oh! shall we ever live to see the time when our native land, our great Kiev, shall resound with holy songs in honour of the true God? (*He sinks into a reverie.*) (*Behind the scenes begins the chorus of Fishers.*) Ah! there it seems are my friends!

(*A large boat with fishermen is seen on the farthest expanse of the river; it shoots across, vanishes behind the scenes, re-*

appears on the next bend of the river, and glides to the fisherman's hut, where it is fastened to the bank.)

CHORUS OF FISHERS.

Hail, O Dnjepr, broad old river,
Flash, and rush, and roar away!
On, O Dnjepr, roll for ever,
Deep and strong, my Life and Stay.

Lo! an orphan, pierced with sadness,
Rocked upon thy billows gray,
I have bartered grief for gladness,
Cast my sorrows all away.

And I live with thee for ever,
Free with thee to rush and rove—
Hail, O Dnjepr! hail, broad river,
Thou, my Nourisher, my Love!

(After the Chorus is ended, the Fishers step on to the bank. Some of them begin to take off the nets, while others approach
ALEXEI.)

ALEXEI.

Good day, children! Why are you so late with your work this morning?

FIRST FISHER.

Why, father, where is the good of tormenting ourselves? There was, indeed, a time when the net had no sooner been drawn up than all the fish were in demand for the Prince's table; but now we only sell a few in the towns!

(THE UNKNOWN *appears in a light boat; lands, and leaning on an oar, listens to the conversation of the fishers.*)

SECOND FISHER.

But what of that, brother! Ten days almost are gone already, and we have neither seen nor heard of our Grand Duke. I wonder whether he is well, father? There was a time when two days did not pass without a feast, and all sorts of merry doings; there were great banquets, chivalrous sports——

ALEXEI.

Every day is not Sunday! And at the Prince's table they over-eat themselves, and drink the sweet wine till they loathe it.

FIRST FISHER.

I should never loathe it, father!

ALEXEI.

And, then, it is not possible to live in such revel and riot every day. He has his duties as Prince, must judge and administer, to give each his right. Here a Waräger plunders a Russian, there our brother the Kiever eyes——

THE UNKNOWN (*interrupting them*).

What? Has he affronted a Waräger?

(*All the Fishers look round, and gaze astounded on the Stranger, who, leaving his oar behind in the boat, steps on to the bank.*)

SECOND FISHER.

Ha! the devil take him! How he has stolen upon us!

ALEXEI.

What seekest thou here, friend? Wilt thou buy fish?

THE UNKNOWN.

Thanks, old man!

FIRST FISHER.

Or is it thy command that the net be thrown in at thy venture?

THE UNKNOWN.

No, friend! I have only climbed the bank to rest a moment. But what have you been talking about so, fishers?

FIRST FISHER.

O, about one thing and another.

THE UNKNOWN.

It seemed to me the discourse was concerning Sswjätoszlav.

ALEXEI.

Of what Sswjätoszlav? If thou speakest of our Prince, friend, express thyself a little more becomingly, and call him not simply Sswjätoszlav, but Grand Duke of Kiev.

THE UNKNOWN (*scornfully smiling*).

Grand Duke of Kiev! His father, too, was once Prince of the Drevlians, but his dominion did not last long. Know'st thou not the proverb, old man, "Strange property never prospers"?

ALEXEI.

Strange property? What dost thou mean, lad? Is not Kiev, by inheritance, his own? Do we not all belong to the Grand Duke?

THE UNKNOWN.

But whom did your fathers and forefathers serve? There's the knot! Not in vain is the saying, that the people have a short memory; but we, it seems, are not wanting in remem-

brances of the olden time. It is well worth the trouble to meditate on that. Already the Warrägers alone are getting too much for us; these dwellers of the coast will soon leave us no clothes to our backs:—"We are brothers-in-arms of the Grand Duke; what is his, therefore, is ours!" No, friends, it was not so in the times of the old princes! What an abundance, then, prevailed everywhere! What a glorious life was that! Now, why do ye stare at me so amazed, fishers? If you have not lived in these times yourselves, you have surely heard of them from your fathers and mothers?

FIRST FISHER.

Yes, we have heard of them; our songs relate that in the olden times, honey-water flowed in our rivers, and the banks were of flour,—but that must have been a long while ago!

THE UNKNOWN.

Not so very long. You know, brothers, who Askold was?—How?—One sees that you do

not. But you must have heard your fathers sometimes tell of your former lawful prince!

ALEXEI.

What dost thou mean with thy babbling, fellow? Do not listen to it, fishers! Our lawful ruler is Prince Sswjätoszlav Igorowitsh. See this mad fellow! We will not wound thy honour. God knows who thou art; but it is not seemly for thee to hold such discourse, nor for us to listen to it.

THE UNKNOWN.

In earnest, old man? Well, if we may not speak, at least we may sing. Will you hear from me a little song, brothers? Fear not, father, there shall be nothing in it about your princes and rivers. Hearken, brothers!

SONG.

In the olden time our fathers
Lived more merrily than we;
Drank sweet mead like common water,
And strong wine abundantly.

They caroused, and sang, and revelled
All the year, those merry men ;—
In the good old time of Askold,—
O how joyous life was then !

CHORUS OF FISHERS.

Hear, ye fishers, hear how joyous,
Life was in the olden time !

THE UNKNOWN.

Then our warriors never plundered
Town and open mart as now ;
To the Greeks alone a terror,
And the tribes along the coast.
Low they bowed before the people,
Honoured high the citizen ;—
In the good old time of Askold,—
O how joyous life was then !

CHORUS OF FISHERS.

Hear, ye fishers, hear how joyous,
Life was in the olden time !

THE UNKNOWN.

Ruled they with the Petshenäges,
 Needed no Waräger's hand,
Held in tribute the Kassoges,
 Devastated old Byzant.
Once were all who now oppress us,
 Smitten down by Kiev's band;—
In the good old time of Askold,—
 O how joyous life was then!

CHORUS OF FISHERS.

Hear, ye fishers, hear how joyous,
 Life was in the olden time!

THE UNKNOWN.

Well, comrades, does my song please you?

ALEXEI.

The song was good, friend, but the words not;
thou shouldst have sung it by thyself! Now,
why do you fools stand gaping there? What
may not all have been in the olden time? We
cannot hear all!

FIRST FISHER.

Tell me, children, who is this Askold, of whom ye talk so much?

SECOND FISHER.

And thou know'st not? Why, he that lies buried there by Ugorsky, straight over the river!

FIRST FISHER.

But who was he, then, really?

SECOND FISHER.

Devil knows! Some miserable bit of a prince perhaps. If the enemy let Kiev be at peace in his time, it was only their laziness that was to blame. Things are different now; nobody dares think of it! Only lately the Jatwäges and Radimitshes began their trade again—and they have got plenty by it! Our brave Prince just smoothed his moustache, and they vanished, as if the devil had fetched them all! But what am I saying? Lived there ever in Russia so mighty a ruler? Did ever so bold a falcon lift his plumage

under heaven, as our dear Father, Prince Sswjä-toszlav Igorowitsh?

FIRST FISHER.

And when our Prince comes galloping along on his swift horse, at the head of his brave warriors, what a splendid figure he makes! One's heart beats with joy to look upon him.

ALEXEI.

And how should it not? He is our liege-lord; his honour is also our honour!

SECOND FISHER.

Certainly! What more do we want? May he only continue to live in health, our Father, the Grand Duke, our red sun!

THE UNKNOWN.

A fine sun! In summer it scorches, and in winter it has no warmth.

FIRST FISHER.

Father! heh, father! what is the knave say-

ing there? Have not the Jatwäges very likely sent him in secret to stir up the people?

SECOND FISHER.

I should not at all wonder, brother!

ALEXEI.

So it is, children! Only see that he does not draw us with him into destruction. Heh, fishers! stop this gossip, it is time to go to work.

(*The Fishers begin to carry off the nets, and move towards the boat.*)

CHORUS OF FISHERS.

Quickly, brothers, up, draw in

Your nets in haste!

And with Perun's* help we'll fill

The boat with fish.

Sturgeons big, with golden scales,

We'll catch for sale.

Quickly, brothers, up, draw in

Your nets in haste!

* Perun, the Slavonian God of Thunder.

(After the Chorus is ended, ALEXEI and all the Fishers get into the boat, and push off to the left.)

THE UNKNOWN. *(Soon afterwards TAROPKA.)*

Stupid people! Well, we shall see what they will say, when on one side the Petshenäges, and on the other the Greeks, fall upon Kiev, and the war-cry of these numberless hordes blends in the single shout, "Down with Sswjätoszlav, and let the descendant of the great Askold be ruler over Kiev!" *(Sinks into deep thought.)*

(From the right side is heard the sound of dancing, and the voice of the singing TAROPKA.)

But methinks—quite right! it is the voice of my servant Taropka.

TAROPKA *(comes singing along the scene).*

In full brilliance shines the moon at midnight,
Glorious, glorious glows the sun in spring-time;
But more glorious than the sun-ray,
But more brilliant than the moon-beam,
Is our great Prince!

THE UNKNOWN (*meeting him*).

Does it become thee, Taropka, to sing such songs in praise of our rascal of a prince?

TAROPKA.

Ah! art thou there, Bojar? Be not angry! I learned this song of an evening from Solowéi Budimirowitsh, the Grand Duke's favourite singer. Ah, Bojar, what a song it is! Listen, I will——

THE UNKNOWN.

Silence!—Livest thou in Kiev to learn stupid songs?

TAROPKA.

Now, what matters it, Bojar? Taropka Golowan sings his song, but does not forget his work; I have got intelligence of everything that is needful for thee to know. But tell me, hast thou spoken with Wszezslav to-day?

THE UNKNOWN.

Yes, I have spoken with him; but have not

yet unveiled to him the secret of his birth; he will learn it to-day, if, according to his promise, he comes at midnight to the grave of Askold.

TAROPKA.

But art thou sure, Bojar, that the Prince's page, Wszezslav, is the same homeless orphan of whom thou art in search?

THE UNKNOWN.

Yes, of that I am sure. The golden griwna* that Wszezslav wore on his breast; his own narration, how he was found by the warriors of Igor in the thicket of the wood, in the hut that concealed me from my hostile pursuers—all confirms this truth. Oh! that the gods would aid me to fulfil the command which my father and grandfather laid upon me! That I could avenge the death of their prince, and restore the grandson of Askold to his lawful inheritance! But I

* Griwna—a gold ornament, which the princes and bojars of the olden time wore about their neck in the form of a coin.

fear, Taropka, the attachment shown by this youth for Sswjätoszlav, his love for a Christian maiden——

TAROPKA.

O, I know, I know, Bojar!—she is the daughter of the old fisher Alexéi, her name is Nadjézhda, and she lives close by here, here in this hut.

THE UNKNOWN.

Here?

TAROPKA.

Yes, Bojar. I was just on the way to her, when thou didst meet me. Wszeszlav has taken me with him sometimes to entertain her with my songs. Only lately I promised her a painted spindle of my own workmanship—I have it here with me. But it seems that neither she nor Alexéi is at home. Quite right—the door is locked.

THE UNKNOWN.

Is the maiden pretty?

TAROPKA.

Yes, so pretty indeed, Bojar, that I cannot wonder enough how it is that she has not yet come into Prediszlavina. There are many nice girls there, but not one beauty like her.

THE UNKNOWN.

Hast thou, then, been thyself to Prediszlavina?

TAROPKA.

To be sure! The Bojar Wuishatta has often sent for me to entertain the fair ones shut up there with my songs. Thou knowest the Grand Duke has appointed him overseer of the Terem there?

THE UNKNOWN.

Wuishatta?—the Grand Duke's trusty major domo!

TAROPKA.

Why, yes! the man that eats ten persons' share, while his fellow domestics die of hunger.

Not for nothing has a song been made upon him:—

Eh, how fat our Lord Wuishatta is!

Eh, how lean his servants are!

When our father sits him down to table,

He gobbles up a whole ox.

THE UNKNOWN (*interrupting him*).

Now, let us have an end of thy singing!
Tell me, Wszezslav loves this Nadjézhda greatly?

TAROPKA.

How should he not?—He is going to marry her.

THE UNKNOWN.

Marry her?—But if somebody carries off his bride?

TAROPKA.

Perun preserve every one of us from such thoughts! They say Wszezslav has a strong hand, as any one will find who attempts to part

him from Nadjézhda—for that, Bojar, I will answer thee!

THE UNKNOWN.

Indeed!—So—if my words should have no effect—Taropka, go to the Bojar Wuishatta, and tell him that I shall await him to-day at noon, at the lower side of the town, by Weleszov's Temple, to communicate to him an important secret.

TAROPKA.

Thou mayst depend on me!—Hollo!—See there—right——

THE UNKNOWN.

What is it?

TAROPKA.

A whole troop of Kiever women is coming up to us; I avoided them not far from here just now. To-day is Uszlad's feast; there will be merry-making from morning to late night before the town.—Heh! Stemid, too, has stolen in between, I declare!—A jolly knave! Booser, wag!

THE UNKNOWN.

Who is this Stemid?

TAROPKA.

The Grand Duke's favourite, and Wszezslav's bosom-friend.—Oho! he is not alone! Who the devil, then, is with him? What a scarecrow! Right, it is Frelaff.

THE UNKNOWN.

What Frelaff?

TAROPKA.

A Waräger warrior, such a quarrel-seeker and swaggerer, as is scarcely to be credited! Not only Stemid, but even his comrades, the Warägers, all banter him.

THE UNKNOWN.

I am tired, and have yet far to go: I will sit down and rest me a little behind this hut. Perhaps I shall come hither again in the afternoon,

give me thy spindle—I will say I had to bring it from thee.

TAROPKA (*giving the spindle, which THE UNKNOWN puts in his pocket*).

Here, Bojar, take it!

SCENE V.

A multitude of townsmen and townswomen, STEMID, FRELAFF, TAROPKA, and THE UNKNOWN in the front of the stage behind the hut. The maidens having sung a song in the round-dance, begin to play at a variety of games.

FRELAFF.

But wherefore, Stemid, do we keep trotting about behind them here like jackanapeses? Who, then, has forbidden us from making up somewhat nearer to these beauties?

STEMID.

Yes, thou art right, come on!

AN AGED KIEVER.

No, boys, meddle not with our maidens; ye will only frighten them!

FRELAFF.

We frighten them? O thou old goat-face! Who art thou, then? a Petshenäge, eh?

AGED KIEVER (*bowing*).

Quite right, gracious sir! You honourable gentlemen are the Grand Duke's warriors, but it becomes not our sisters and daughters to mix with soldiers.

FRELAFF.

With whom, then? With your brothers, no doubt, the shopkeepers of Kiev!

TAROPKA.

Let not your honour be enraged, but it is better to have to do with trading Kievers, than with you, gentlemen and brave warriors! Not without cause has the song been made:—

Heida, hail to thee, my wealthy guest!
My wealthy guest, young merchant's son!
Neither fair nor fit art thou, my friend,
But fair and fit is thy shining gold!

STEMID.

Bah, bah, bah! Taropka Golowan! What
brings thee hither? Wilt thou, forsooth, alienate
the pretty maidens from me?

TAROPKA.

Ah, your Honour, how should I! In truth,
if thy pocket rings not, thou wilt catch little
here, Bojar!

FRELAFF.

Are your Beauties, then, so cold? That's a
fault now! No! in my land, not only the girls,
but the young wives, have no resemblance to your
fair Kievers. With us on the coast, life is dif-
ferent; there the warrior passes for something.
I swear by Oden*, that never has a pretty girl

* Odin.

met Frelaff, the jolly fellow, without casting him a friendly glance, or a pretty word or two.

STEMID.

Now, what's the good of this braggardism, Frelaff? Hear, brother; hast thou ever chanced to dip thy face in a river, in calm weather, to drink?

FRELAFF.

Why not?

STEMID.

Then thou, doubtless, rememberest, how it seemed to thee that even the water-nixies peered up at thee out of the depth. With thy red nose and thy foxy cheeks, thou flatterest thyself that pretty girls look at thee!

FRELAFF.

Well, why not? Needs a warrior, then, appear in the sight of a young damsel like thy comrade Wszeszlav?

STEMID.

Wszeszlav?—Yes, Frelaff, he is younger and prettier; but just try a quarrel with him! Wszeszlav has taken far better fellows than thee by the girdle.

FRELAFF.

What! — this slim bit of a lad measure with a fellow like me!—Know'st thou not that I, Frelaff, the son of Ruszlav, grandson of Ruald, and great-grandson of Ingelot, acknowledge no stronger than myself; that I——

STEMID.

Peace now, peace now, braggard! see, the maidens have arranged themselves in a circle: very likely one of the beauties will sing a song. Let us listen.

FRELAFF.

And I vow by Hela, that if this songstress is worthy of being kissed by Frelaff, I will kiss her.

STEMID.

But if she is any one's bride?

FRELAFF.

Well, what then? Let him look on quietly, and smack his lips.

STEMID.

But if she has a young broad-shouldered bridegroom near her, who will not suffer his wife to be kissed?

FRELAFF.

What has that to do with me?

STEMID.

Now, a truce to thy brags, Frelaff. Thou hast always a wide mouth; but when it comes to real earnest, and the fist is shown thee, thou art the first to creep behind the bush.

FRELAFF.

Who?—I?—I, a born Waräger, fear your Russian fists?—Wait! I will show thee how we

FINALE.

CHORUS OF MAIDENS.

In the valley there a silver
 Birch-tree rose aloft;
 By the birch-tree sat a damsel,
 Wept and sighed full oft.
 Ah, sweet maiden,
 Sorrow-laden!

ONE OF THE MAIDENS.

Wherefore planted I a garden,
 Tended tree and flower,
 Fruit and blossom—wherefore, but to
 Build my love a bower?
 Ah, sweet maiden,
 Sorrow-laden!

Ask ye why in groves around
 Birdies sing their lays?
 Listen, all their songs resound
 My beloved's praise!
 Ah, sweet maiden,
 Sorrow-laden!

Flew away my falcon bright,
Downy-feathered, swift as light :—
Word or tidings never bore,
Flew away, and came no more !
Ah, sweet maiden,
Sorrow-laden !

CHORUS OF MAIDENS.

Flowers of many hues I sow,
They shall sprout and twinkle—
I will rise at break of day,
Flowerets to besprinkle !
Ah, sweet maiden,
Sorrow-laden !

(FRELAFF goes up to the Songstress, and kisses her.)

THE MAIDEN.

What means this? Away! we are not
Here for thy sport, know !

CHORUS OF MAIDENS.

Warrior, 't is not well! away!
Let the maiden go !

THE MAIDEN.

I shall——

FRELAFF.

Fear thou not, sweet girl,
One kiss more, love! there, so, so!

CHORUS OF MAIDENS.

Warrior, 't is not well! Away!
Let the maiden go!

*(The Maiden tears herself loose, and runs to the hut
FRELAFF follows, and seizes her by the hand.)*

FRELAFF.

Stop, love! here, love! come with me!

THE UNKNOWN.

As to that, friend, we shall see!

(Comes forward.)

Leave her, scoundrel, or I'll tame thee,—

Hence, Waräger, or I'll shame thee!

FRELAFF.

Thou liest ! Who art thou, that thou darest show me
So rude a front ?

THE UNKNOWN (*to the liberated Maiden*).

Trip thou away !

(*To FRELAFF.*)

Now then, if thou art curious to know me,
Listen ! The broad Dnjepr is my camp,
The holy Russia is my house,
Warägers are my mortal hate,
My curse is on them one and all—
I do not fear their menaces,
But scorn them ; and my highest wish
Is that the whole herd
May feel the weight of Russian fists !

CHORUS.

Is that the whole herd
May feel the weight of Russian fists !

STEMID.

Now, friend, how is 't with love and kisses ?

TAROPKA.

Alas, when love its object misses !

FRELAFF.

No, 't is unheard of, such disgrace!

(Drawing his sword.)

Stand, villain!

THE UNKNOWN *(wresting the sword from him).*

What! thou draw'st the sword?

Go, ply the distaff, monkey-face!

CHORUS OF KIEVERS.

O hero, faint-hearted, weak-handed!

To the spinning-wheel remanded!

FRELAFF.

He is gone with my sword!

Set after him—take him!

KIEVER AND TAROPKA.

He is gone with his sword!

FRELAFF.

Set after him—hold him!

Bring him to me!

Thou robber, thou harefoot!
When Frelaff contends with thee,
Look to thy safety!
Thief, filcher accursed!
Seek him out—capture him—
Bring him to me!

THE UNKNOWN (*appearing in his boat*).

Here I am!

CHORUS.

Here he is!

FRELAFF.

Damnably filcher,
Give me my sword!

THE UNKNOWN.

Thy sword? On the instant!
A sword will I give thee, such as becomes thee—
Here it is, friend! take it, friend! Now, farewell!

FRELAFF (*running up*).

My sword! What see I! A spindle!

CHORUS.

He gives thee a spindle!

TAROPKA (*picking it up*).

How prettily painted—how tastefully carved!

CHORUS.

O hero, faint-hearted, weak-handed!

To the spinning-wheel remanded!

FRELAFF.

Wait, soon will I show you—

Whom do you laugh at, you pack of fools?

TAROPKA (*presenting FRELAFF the spindle*).

Thou struck'st him down right valiantly—

Hast bravely foiled thine enemy—

Now sheathe thy glittering blade.

FRELAFF.

Silence!

STEMID.

Nay, do not make such faces, friend!

I'll take it up, if thou wilt not.

(*Picking up the spindle.*)

Say, thou didst lose it in a fray
With the Russalkies *.—Come, brother, come.
[*Exeunt.*

CHORUS.

Farewell, hero ! feeble-handed !
To the spinning-wheel remanded !

* Water-nixies.

END OF ACT I.

•

SECOND ACT.

The Stage represents the interior of a spacious bow-windowed room ; a large covered table, at which warriors are sitting and carousing.

SCENE I.

PROSTAN, WSZESZLAV, FENKAL, OSTROMIR, JAKUN,
FRELAFF, IKMOR, *and many other Warägian
and Russian Warriors.*

CHORUS.

Hiss in the goblet,
Sparkling mead !
Flash in the beaker,
Shimmering wine !

FENKAL.

Up, drink to Uszlad's honour !
To Russian-land's good fortune,

To the weal of all the fair,
To the joy of all friends,
To the confusion of rebels,
To the shame of foes!

CHORUS.

To the confusion of rebels,
To the shame of foes!

FENKAL.

He who drinks, and is not drunken,
Who loves what is good,
Who is happy with beauty,
And fearless in fight;
Is a true hero,
Our brother and friend!

CHORUS.

Is a true hero,
Our brother and friend!

PROSTAN.

Well done, brother! Just after my heart!
Up with the beaker! To the honour of Uszlad,
to the honour of the Russian land!

FRELAFF (*drinking off his beaker*).

And to the praise of the Warägian warriors.

OSTROMIR.

Aha! dost thou join in, Frelaff? I was thinking thou hadst lost thy tongue.

JAKUN.

Indeed, he is somewhat silent to-day. But thou, too, Wszezslav, seemest to me to have no festive countenance.

WSZESZLAV.

I am not very well.

PROSTAN.

O, nonsense! Drink with us till morning, and all will be right enough.

WSZESZLAV.

No, comrades, ye have promised to let me go before midnight.

PROSTAN.

Yes, if Stemid comes to relieve thee.

FRELAFF.

Now, God knows what it is ye find in this Stemid! As if ye could not drink without him! What is there, then, that's good for anything in him? A stripling of a fellow, the likeness of nothing! no shape, no stature—in his cheeks a maiden's blushes, and in his head a woman's understanding!

PROSTAN.

But in his hands, brother, he has no spindle!

FRELAFF.

Spindle! — What about spindle? — What spindle?

PROSTAN.

What? we know well enough what! Stemid looks like a pretty girl in face merely; but when it comes to fists, there are few such fellows as he!

OSTROMIR.

I have seen him, myself, fall on a bear alone.

FRELAFF.

Now, that is good!—Once, forsooth, the fellow succeeded in ripping up the hide of a sleeping bear with a pitch-fork, and ye never can wonder enough at it! I will not speak of myself—but my ancestor Ingelot once attacked a bear with nothing but his fist, and wrestled with him——

JAKUN.

And mastered him?

FRELAFF.

As if that were a wonder!—To master a bear is nothing—I know that from experience.

PROSTAN.

What did he do then?

FRELAFF.

What did he do?—Flayed him alive!

PROSTAN.

And the bear didn't even growl?

FRELAFF.

There 's a question, whether he growled! Of course, he roared, but he did not roar himself loose!

JAKUN.

Now, brother, give over making fun of us!

(STEMID enters, and stations himself, unobserved by anybody, behind FRELAFF.)

FRELAFF.

What? dost thou think I lie? I have the whole skin yet, which, together with a sword, I inherited from my ancestor. But know ye, comrades, what a sword that is?—To this day the proverb remains in my country, "Fear not the stormy sea, nor the thunder of heaven; but fear the sword of Ingelot." I once encountered a man who had two steel helmets on his head, and as soon as I smote thereon, it went

right through to his girdle; but on the sword—believe me, brothers—there was not a notch to be seen!

STEMID.

How should we not believe thee! Thou art a connoisseur of swords!

FRELAFF.

Ah! art thou there, Stemid?

PROSTAN.

Most obedient servant!—Be seated, comrade!

STEMID.

Wait, brothers! Ye were talking of a sword; if ye will, I will show you such a wonderful sword as ye have never seen in all your lives.

WARRIORS.

Show us, show us!

STEMID.

And thou art silent, Frelaff? Or wilt thou not wonder at my self-cutting sword?

FRELAFF.

Now, give over, Stemid! What jokes these are!

STEMID.

I am not joking.—But how? shall I show it?

FRELAFF (*rising up*).

Ah, brother, leave that! I must first whisper a word or two in thine ear (*leading STEMID aside*). Do me the favour to tell nobody of this accursed spindle!

OSTROMIR.

What are ye whispering there with one another?

STEMID.

O, nothing! See, comrades, before I show you this wonderful sword, I must relate to you how I came by it.

FRELAFF (*softly*).

Now, leave it, brother!

STEMID (*not regarding him*).

This morning I went with Frelaff to look on at the round-dance of the fair maidens.

FRELAFF.

Mark me, Stemid, I am patient, but if thou venturest——

STEMID.

Thou wilt not frighten me out of my wits, surely? Moderate thyself, brother! Thou knowest I have Ingelot's sword with me.

FRELAFF.

The devil, what does that mean!—Take heed to thyself, young glib-tongue, I will bring thy tongue to silence.

STEMID.

Oho! indeed?—Hear, then, comrades!

FRELAFF (*grasping the handle of his sword*).

Draw thy sword, damned banterer!

STEMID (*pulling out the spindle*).

With pleasure!

PROSTAN.

Ah, the wag! See, brothers, a spindle!

OSTROMIR.

Make room for the knaves; but hark ye, if ye fight, it must be to the death.

STEMID.

Now, thou valiant champion, come on!

ALL.

Come on, Frelaff!

FRELAFF (*resisting*).

Thou art not worthy, king-fisher, that I should defile my steel-sword with thee! Talk, talk away, lad! Chatter, amuse the company, damned swaggerer! Windbag!

STEMID.

But, of a truth, it would not be bad to get a dulcimer-player to come; here is no one to divert us. Fenkal's tongue already hardly hangs in

his throat, and Frelaff will soon no longer stand on his feet. Heyday! Heh!

TAROPKA (*singing behind the scenes*).

Ah! thou blue, blue sea!

STEMID.

Right, it is Taropka! Wait, comrades! ye will soon have something to entertain you.

(*Runs out.*)

FRELAFF.

What's he running after now? Poor fellow! He ought to play on the cither, but not go with a sword, the damned fiddler!

WSZESZLAV.

But art thou not ashamed, Frelaff, to be so angry over a jest? What harm has he done thee?

FRELAFF.

Harm, sayest thou?—No, brother, the eagle of the sea, the bright falcon, the white vulture,

could not be harmed by him; this motley-winged raven harm me, the jolly fellow? Reach me, brother Prostän, that flask of wine hither. (*Drinks.*) I do not wish to disgrace myself now; but if I set him in one hand, and make a dash at him with the other—where is he?

PROSTAN.

Ah! now, brother, to-day is Uszlad's day—we must not quarrel.

FRELAFF.

But what the devil have I to do with your Uszlad? I will know nothing of him! But if it goes on like this, I will give the coxcomb a lesson. (*Drinks.*) Say the word, children, and I will tear his neck off this instant before your eyes! (*Drinks.*) I will wrench him!—knead him into a ram's horn!—twist him into a knot! (*Springs up.*) Are ye willing? (*STEMID enters; FRELAFF sits down again.*) Now, thou mayst think thyself lucky! Thank the gods that I have no desire to rise!

STEMID (*turning towards the door*).
Now, what has got thee?—Come in!

SCENE II.

THE SAME. TAROPKA.

OSTROMIR.

What a centaur-champion! The devil, what grimaces! Listen, brother, thou pleasest me!

TAROPKA (*bowing*).

The pretty girls say so, too, my good sir.

STEMID.

Beg ye will make his acquaintance. This, comrades, is my trusty friend, and though not in such repute as our deceased singer Solowéi Budimirowitsh, yet he sings and plays no worse than he.

FRELAFF.

Hoo, what a grimace! — But the head, the head—a splendid copper tub!

TAROPKA.

Whatever it may be, friend, it sits more firmly on its shoulders than thy insolent head.

FRELAFF.

What is this? Thou nailed-up wooden head, dost thou think, forsooth, I am drunk?

PROSTAN.

Be quiet, Frelaff! Drink, and be silent! But thou, Taropka, what wilt thou drink; wine or mead?

TAROPKA.

I will drink wine, honoured sir, but without, on that account, despising mead. Let it only be brought hither, and we will drink to the fame of the host! (*They reach him a goblet.*) A joyous feast, your honours, and a light intoxication!

(*Drinks.*) Ye carouse and live high, but we must take the fallen crumbs contented.

STEMID.

Now, Taropka, make us merry!

TAROPKA.

What dost thou wish, brother? It will delight me to amuse your honours. Is it your pleasure that I tell you a tale, together with a song of a brave youth, and what happened to him in the wood behind the Shtshekovishian Mountains? It was in the days of the Russalkies, a long, long time ago, when yet the princes Askold and Dir ruled over the land.

PROSTAN.

Then it is no tale?

TAROPKA.

How shall I expound it to you, gracious lords, without saying too much? It is a tale—and no tale; it was, and was not; but the old women maintain it really happened.

ALL.

Tell us it, tell us it!

TAROPKA (*bows and sings*).

Had the brave fellow not forgotten midnight's hour—had he not gone into the thicket of the wood on Russalkies' day! In former times there lived a brave warrior, Swäniszlav, called the Fearless; he loved a beautiful maiden, whose name was Miloszwäta. And once, in the spring-time, on Russalkies' day, he told his beloved he would go into the thicket of the wood to divert himself with hunting. Miloszwäta sighed, and she knew why: whoever on Russalkies' day remains in the wood until midnight, never finds his way back again. "If thou returnest not before midnight," said the damsel, "then seek me on the sandy bottom of lake Doloba!" "I come," lisped Swäniszlav, and he departed and went his way.

BALLAD.

Red-bordered was the arch of heaven,
Already by the sun's last sheen,

Comes Swäniszlav the way pursuing,
That leads into the forest-green;
And where, amid the depth of woodlands,
The mingling pathways disappear,
There sits a maiden by an oak-tree,
And with her white hands lures him near.
And Swäniszlav, by love bewildered,
His heart o'ercome with passion warm,
Sees not, alas! the green locks flowing,
Follows the nixy's lovely form.
Warrior think, O think with dread—
Midnight in Doloba's bed!

And lo! upon the river's border
What gorgeous palaces are seen;
And forth, to bid the warrior welcome,
Young damsels trip of lovely mien.
And they allure him with soft glances,
And lead him in with sweet control,
Where mead and wine his senses freshen,
And songs of love enchant his soul.
Hour after hour, meanwhile, has vanished,
The warrior never heeds their flight—
When sudden—hark, the winds are howling,
Laughter resounds—it strikes midnight!
Warrior think, O think with dread—
Midnight in Doloba's bed!

Time glides away—the summer flower
Upon the bank no longer blooms;
Polelja's*, Lado's* feasts are over—
Young Swäniszlav he never comes.
And see, now fly the days of autumn,
Now stands the winter-wood unleaved—
That tidingless the youth had vanished,
The wondering people long believed.
Until one morn they found him early
In bushy thicket lying deep—
There Swäniszlav the warrior slumbered,
And slept the everlasting sleep.
Warrior think, O think with dread—
Midnight in Doloba's bed!

PROSTAN.

But what became of his bride?

TAROPKA.

The old women relate that she drowned herself in Lake Doloba. They say that, since that time, the lake howls every night like a wild beast; and at the hour of midnight she rises from the

* Old Slavonian deities: Polelja, the Slavonian Ceres; and Lado, the Slavonian Venus.

abyss, seats herself on the bank, and sings till the earth trembles. They say, too, that she then always murmurs the words, "Hadst thou been joyous, O my beloved, and not forgotten the hour of midnight!"

(WSZESZLAV *rises*).

OSTROMIR.

What now, Wszechslav? whither away?

WSZESZLAV.

I am not quite well.

STEMID.

Of a truth, and so thou appearest to me! Thine eyes do not look at all natural!—Do not hinder him, brothers! Let him go to get a little repose. But wilt thou not first take a sleeping cup?

WSZESZLAV.

No, I have no taste for it! Until we meet again, comrades!

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.

THE SAME WITHOUT WSZESZLAV.

PROSTAN.

He really seems to be unwell! He sat by thee still as death, without so much as wetting his moustache.

FRELAFF.

Moustache, say you? Why, where should he get one from? The lad has not yet done growing!

SCENE IV.

THE SAME.—WUISHATTA.

PROSTAN.

Ah! an unexpected guest! Our worthy Major Domo Wuishatta—welcome, welcome!

WUISHATTA.

Many thanks; I greet you, comrades! Now,

how are ye faring? Is there enough for all? Shall I order another keg or two of mead to be rolled in?

FRELAFF.

Ay, in with 'em, Bojar, that's all! Is there yet store in the cellar? We are the lads to make it vanish!

WUISHATTA.

Now, wilt thou soon leave off? How it stands with the others I know not; but I see that into thee, Frelaff, not much more could be got, even with a funnel.

OSTROMIR.

Where hast thou been to-day, Bojar?

WUISHATTA.

All about everywhere! I have been into the Lower Town, and seen how the townsmen and townswomen celebrate Uszlad's feast. Ah, children! we live no longer in the old times! All Kiev's beauties have vanished. Believe me

I have not seen one pretty face! There was a fellow who promised to show me a beauty, but I do not believe him!—Eh! Taropka Golowan! Art thou here too, brother? Hear, friend! Thou dost manage to be everywhere, one time or another, hast thou not started a beauty anywhere? Now tell me! One might grow mad with vexation! Are there, then, really no more pretty girls to be found?

TAROPKA (*bowing*).

How should we know anything, sir? We are obscure people; but your honour—that is another thing: thou standest at the fountain.

WUISHATTA,

And where dost thou stand, buckheaded gossip? Where thou canst drink people's wine, and sing them songs?

TAROPKA.

Quite right, father!

WUISHATTA.

Heh!—Do ye know, children? They tell me that the Christians have also assembled to celebrate Uszlad's day after their fashion, in their old chapel on the Ugorian Place, close by the grave of Askold. One sees they are wiser than you, children; they worship all together—men and women, young men and maidens. Now what say ye, fellows? Shall we not make up a party and join them?—Eh?

FRELAFF.

Capital thought—come on, brothers!

OSTROMIR.

Now what's the hindrance? Let us go, children!

ALL (*excepting* STEMID).

Come!

STEMID.

What possesses you, comrades? Or have ye forgotten that the Grand Duke has forbidden us insulting the people?

FRELAFF.

Yes, the people—but these are Christians!

OSTROMIR.

Of course! Enemies of our Prince.

PROSTAN.

Slaves of the cunning Greeks.

JAKUN.

That neither believe in Perun nor in Oden.

TAROPKA.

Neither sing nor make merry.

WUISHATTA.

And keep their daughters shut up.

FRELAFF.

Then come, we will get a sight of them for ourselves!

WUISHATTA.

Hark ye, children! First come for a moment

along with me; I will set wine before you, such as ye have never drunk in all your lives; and then we will all go off to Askold's grave. Now what say ye? Does that please you?

ALL.

We come, we come!

WUISHATTA.

But let us first hear a song, children! Heh! Taropka Golowan! Give us Uszlad's song in the best style, and we will give thee somewhat in the best style. Now, art ready? Begin!

TAROPKA.

Directly, Bojar; only let me just moisten my throat first.

(Takes a beaker of wine, drinks and sings, holding it in his hand.)

I.

In honour of Uszlad, the God of Joy!

To the fame of the princes of the land!

We tipple to day, and stagger about,

And drink till we can no longer stand.

Who is he that in wine discovers no pleasure?
Wine is no poison—wine is our treasure!
Then tipple it down without measure,
In honour of Uszlad, the God of Joy!

CHORUS.

Then tipple it down without measure,
In honour of Uszlad, the God of Joy.

TAROPKA.

II.

Down from our fathers' times till now,
This holy custom has ever obtained—
And we jolly fellows will drink, I vow,
More beakers than our fathers drained!
To day from custom we drink our fill,
And to-morrow we drink what is left us still.
Then tipple it down with good will,
In honour of Uszlad, the God of Joy!

CHORUS.

Then tipple it down with good will,
In honour of Uszlad, the God of Joy!

*(After the ending of USZLAD'S song, as the rest go out,
PROSTAN is kept back by WUISHATTA.)*

WUISHATTA.

Wait, Prostän! I have to whisper a word in thy ear.

PROSTAN.

What is it, Bojar?

WUISHATTA.

Hear, I will tell thee: it is not for nothing that I lead you to Askold's grave.—Who knows? Perhaps chance so orders it that one of these fair midnight worshippers may take my fancy.—Things are in a bad plight, Prostän, very bad! All does not go according to the Grand Duke's wish! If one could procure him a fresh pretty maiden, it would be a glorious piece of business! In any case, take five or six fellows with thee from the Castle watch: we might, perhaps, happen to light on a pretty girl in Pre-diszlavina, and then we should have somebody at hand.

PROSTAN.

I understand, Bojar! Depend upon me!

WUISHATTA.

Then go and set about it, Prostän. I will keep the others with me. Do thou perform thy commission, and come back anon to help us drink my good mead.

[*Exeunt*

SCENE V.

CHANGE OF DECORATION.

The Stage represents the bank of the Dnjepr. In the background, to the right of the spectators, are seen, through trees scattered at intervals close on the bank of the river, the ruins of a Christian temple; a great part of it is fallen in pieces. Quite in front, on the left side, a high hill; round about a wilderness; beyond the river the meadow-expanses of the Dnjepr. The beams of the full moon break upon the water. As the curtain is drawn up, THE UNKNOWN stands at the foot of the Grave-hill, looking into the distance. In the background, on the river's bank, men in simple apparel, and women wrapped in veils, are seen

stealing timidly along: they disappear among the ruins of the church. During the chant of THE UNKNOWN, the windows of the ruinous temple are lighted up.

THE UNKNOWN (*leaning on a battle-axe*).

Soon, amid the heavenly sphere,
Moon, expires thy silver light;
Soon approaches midnight drear,
Yet is Wszezslav not in sight!

(*Pauses.*)

CHORUS (*scarcely audible, from the ruins*).

Father! Father, full of mercies!
God! thy children safely keep.

THE UNKNOWN.

Soon, behind the western hill,
Sinks in gloom the heavenly light—
Soon in Kiev all is still,
Yet is Wszezslav not in sight!

CHORUS.

Save, defend us, O Most Holy!
Help us in the time of need!

THE UNKNOWN.

Peace, peace, prophetic mouth of the heart!

Why dost thou warn me of misfortune?

Why fixest thou the pangs of doubt

In my wild, torn, distracted breast?

No! Sooner shall the Dnjepr broad

Flow like a streamlet soft away—

The stars shall sooner fall to earth—

The sun go down at noon—than e'er

The grandson of the mighty Askold

Shall brook eternal infamy!

Hark!—Who comes there?—Right, it is
Wszeszlav!

SCENE VI.

THE UNKNOWN AND WSZESZLAV.

THE UNKNOWN (*going to meet him*).

Now, this is making one's-self waited for!
Thou seemest to be not very curious to know
who thy parents were.

WSZESZLAV.

It was impossible for me to come earlier ;
but if thou knewest with what impatience——

THE UNKNOWN (*interrupting him*).

Thou wishest to know the race from which
thou descendest? O Wszezslav! Wszezslav!
there was a time when thine ancient race towered
mightily upwards like the proud oak over all
this Russian land; miscreants hewed off the
stem to the root; it fell—and stormy winds
have scattered its shivered branches far and
wide.

WSZESZLAV.

But who am I really?

THE UNKNOWN.

Till now the servant and slave of Sswjä-
toszlav.—Servant and slave!—But patience,
Wszezslav! Sooner shall the clear Don roll
backwards his silver waves, sooner shall men
call the mighty eagle a coal-mouse, than thou any

longer boast of thy service under Sswjätoszlav !
Thou knowest whom this lofty grave-hill covers ?

WSZESZLAV.

This is Askold's grave.

THE UNKNOWN.

But dost thou also know that Askold was Prince in great Kiev ?—that he, the victim of assassination, fell beneath the blows of infamous traitors, and that his unlamented shade calls for blood ? Wszeszlay ! this unfortunate Ruler was thy grandsire, and his murderers were the ancestors of thy Prince and Commander.

WSZESZLAV.

How is that possible ?

THE UNKNOWN.

Yes ! Thou art the only scion of this renowned race ; and I, the grandson of the faithful servant of thy ancestor, the first that hails

thee, Wszezslav, lawful Ruler and Prince of great Kiev!

WSZESZLAV.

Unfortunate!—What sayest thou?—I Prince of great Kiev? I rise against my lord and benefactor!

THE UNKNOWN.

Thy benefactor!

WSZESZLAV.

Yes! my benefactor! Has not Sswjätoszlav cherished me in my youth? Has he not given the homeless orphan food and drink?

THE UNKNOWN.

Unthinking one! Call'st thou him thy benefactor who, robbing thy lawful inheritance, throws thee, like a starving dog, a piece of bread soaked in the blood of thy fathers? O Wszezslav, Wszezslav! O child of misfortune, whom I have borne on my arms! Is it possible that the angry gods can have condemned in thee alone the race

of the Askolds to perpetual slavery?—No, no! I see in these noble glances the fire of revenge flash up!—'T is well, Wszezslav! The hour of revenge is come. Thy sword be drawn! Evil for evil! Blood for blood!

WSZESZLAV.

No! never!

THE UNKNOWN.

Never!—Oh! then will men curse the hour in which thou becamest Sswjätoszlav's servant! They will curse those who brought thee up—an ignominious slave! Yes, they will curse the gods themselves who have hardened thy heart!—Yes; I curse them!

CHORUS *in the ruins.*

Praised be God when He delivers,
Praised be He when He avenges!

THE UNKNOWN.

What is that?

WSZESZLAV.

Hear'st thou not? Thou cursest thy gods,
but they praise the Lord—these are Christians.

The Voice of NADJEZHDA.

Praised be God when He delivers,
Praised be He when He avenges!

WSZESZLAV.

Yes, right! That is Nadjézhda's voice.

(Hastening away to the ruins.)

THE UNKNOWN.

Frantic fool! Whither goest thou?

WSZESZLAV.

Leave me, seducing devil! Here, before the
temple of the true God, I renounce for ever all
my rights, and swear faithfully and bravely to
serve my benefactor, and to become Nadjézhda's
husband—that is all my soul longs for. Farewell!

(Goes into the ruins.)

SCENE VII.

THE UNKNOWN, *and soon after* WUISHATTA.

THE UNKNOWN.

He is gone!—Unworthy son of the unworthy Ssudislava! And so there remains, then, no other means!—Good! We shall see whether thou wilt call him benefactor, and remain his faithful servant, who carries off thy bride.

(*Goes up to the ruins, and looks through the window.*)

There she is!—by his side—in a blue veil—
• O, she is beautiful!

WUISHATTA (*turning round*).

Here, children, hither! Hey, they are loitering behind! Yet they seemed to be young folk!—Bah! bah! bah!—Who is that? Holla! not the same surely who promised me to-day at

Weleszov's chapel—quite right! Art thou the fellow?

THE UNKNOWN.

I am, Bojar!

WUISHATTA.

Now, how is it, friend? When wilt thou keep thy word, and show me that wonderful beauty, before whom all our Prediszlavinian beauties fade away, like the stars before the red sun?

THE UNKNOWN.

When?—Directly, if thou wishest.

WUISHATTA.

How should I not wish!—The sooner the better—Where is she, then?

THE UNKNOWN (*pointing to the ruins*).

See here!

WUISHATTA.

Aha! So she is a Christian!

THE UNKNOWN (*leading him to the ruins*).

See'st thou the maiden there in the blue veil?

WUISHATTA.

I see, I see! Now truly, brother, that is something splendid! What a beautiful girl! But where are my lads stopping behind?

FINALE.

CHORUS *in the ruins*.

We praise and thank Thee, O Most High!

Our shelter and our shield adore:

Maker of earth, and sea, and sky,

We bless and praise Thee evermore!

CHORUS OF WARRIORS (*behind the scenes*).

Then tipple it down without measure,

In honour of Uszlad, the God of Joy!

WUISHATTA (*going to meet them*).

Now, brothers, move a little faster!

SCENE VIII.

All the Persons of the first Scene except STEMID.

TAROPKA.

To-day from custom we drink our fill,
And to-morrow we drink what is left us still.

CHORUS OF WARRIORS.

Then tipple it down with good will,
In honour of Uszlad, the God of Joy!

CHORUS *in the Ruins.*

We praise and thank Thee, O most High!
Our shelter and our shield adore!

FRELAFF.

I am the boldest among you—
I lead you forwards—come on!
And he who will not come with us,
In shame shall rue it anon!

CHORUS.

And he who will not come with us,
In shame shall rue it anon!

FRELAFF.

But yet for greater security,
We 'll go in, all in a lump—
Ye see yon ruins and rubbish—
We 'll clear them all at a jump!

WUISHATTA.

What the deuce! ye will ruin the whole affair!
The sweet little bird we so shall scare.

● FRELAFF.

Courage, my lads, keep close to my side,
And we cannot fail of the beautiful bride!

CHORUS.

Courage, ye lads, keep close to his side,
And ye cannot fail of the beautiful bride!

(Men and women emerge from the ruins.)

WUISHATTA.

Make no disturbance ! softly there !
See, see, they have taken alarm—
They hear us—they fly—hie after them, hie !

(FRELAFF and half the warriors run to the Dnjepr's bank
to intercept the fugitives from the temple.)

WUISHATTA (*to himself*).

We beset them hard, before, behind—
And what we seek, methinks we shall find.

(*To the Warriors.*)

Softly, softly ! still and light !
Search around, and choose the right !

CHORUS.

Softly, softly ! still and light !
Search around, and choose the right !

WUISHATTA (*softly to Prostän*).

The chief command is given to thee—
Away, then ! bring her speedily !

GENERAL CHORUS.

Softly, softly ! still and light !

Search around, and choose the right !

(Go away to the left, and are lost sight of in the ruins.)

THE UNKNOWN *(coming forth from behind the grave-hill,
where he had concealed himself).*

They are gone ! and now 't will soon be seen, friend,
How thou wilt call Prince Sswjätoszlav at present !

PROSTAN *(in the ruins).*

By the Prince's command——

WSZESZLAV *(in the same place).*

Begone !

THE UNKNOWN.

There, if I am not deceived, is the clash of
swords !—Forwards, Wszeszlav !

WSZESZLAV *(in the ruins).*

CHORUS OF WARRIORS (*in the same place*).

Up, after the murderer!

Seize upon Wszeszlav

CHORUS OF WOMEN (*in the same place*).

Haste, children, away!

'T is madness to stay!

WSZESZLAV (*comes running from the ruins,
sword in hand*).

I, a murderer? My bride is robbed from me
—my all is gone!

THE UNKNOWN (*clasping him by the hand*).

Not so!—thou still livest—and we will rescue
Nadjézhda.

WSZESZLAV.

Can we?

THE UNKNOWN.

Yes, yes! (*Aside.*) Now thou art mine!

TAROPKA (*in great haste*).

Save her then, save her!

Rescue Nadjézhda!

[*Exeunt* WSZESZLAV and the UNKNOWN.]

SCENE IX.

All the former Persons.

WUISHATTA.

Haste to the right, ye—

Ye to the left—

Seize on the villain,

Bring him to me!

CHORUS.

Up, friends! a villain

Has murdered Prostän—

Seek him, and bring him

Swift to the Prince.

FRELAPP.

The boaster, the robber,

The stripling, the knave!

WUISHATTA.

Find we the murderer,

'Venge we Prostän—

Base blood to-morrow

Spouts on the block!

CHORUS.

Find we the murderer,
'Venge we Prostän—
Base blood to-morrow
Spouts on the block !

END OF ACT II.

THIRD ACT.

The Stage represents the inner court of the village of Predislavina. In the background a large building with balconies, covered passages, and balcony-chambers. To the left, in the foreground, a house, one side of which terminates in a shrubbery, separated from the court by a stone wall, whereon the watchman is walking to and fro. On the rise of the curtain, there is seen on the balcony of the central building a number of maidens sitting and standing.

SCENE I.

Maidens. Soon after BUSZLAJEVNA and NADJEZHDA.

CHORUS.

Ah! how mournful 't is to languish
All the year, so closely barred!
From the walls the eye can scarcely
See the broad, the smiling fields!
Song itself ne'er makes us joyous—
Only out of grief sing we!

Early set apart for sorrow,
Sorrowful we spend our days !
Hapless beings, wherefore, wherefore,
Are we in the beauteous world ?
Song itself ne'er makes us joyous,
Only out of grief sing we !

(*From the fore-house come BUSZLAJEVNA and NADJEZHDA.*)

BUSZLAJEVNA.

Come, my white swan, come ! It is somewhat airy here !—Now give over fretting, my pet swallow !—They say that our lord, the Grand Duke, will soon come hither, to amuse himself with hawking ; and if he sees thee, my beauty, I am sure he will be quite enchanted with thee !

NADJEZHDA.

How ! you will show me to Prince Sswjätoszlav ?

BUSZLAJEVNA.

Dost thou fancy we will hide thee from him ? Ah, thou simple little fool ! Hast thou been brought hither to Prediszlavina, to be shown to

nobody? No, my joy! People bury treasures indeed in the earth, but not such.

●

NADJEZHDA.

Gracious heaven!

BUSZLAJEVNA.

What ails thee, what ails thee, child?—Art thou in thy right mind?—To weep because thou art going to be shown to the Grand Duke!—Give over, I pray thee, my heart! Who knows whether our lord will not fall in love with thee, and deem thee worthy perhaps to become his consort?—If he should command to call thee Grand Duchess—

NADJEZHDA.

Oh! I will not! Mother, mother dear! take me to thee!

BUSZLAJEVNA.

Hear, my beauty! If thou wishest, we will bring thy mother here too—only say where she is!

NADJEZHDA.

Where she is? Oh! she is there, where neither sorrow, nor tears, nor sufferings are—where no one forbids me to love my Wszezslav!—

BUSZLAJEVNA.

Wszezslav!—Now only look! Wszezslav!—Ah, thou strange girl! How many times am I to tell thee that thou must not think of this forward-head, who has dared to lift his hand against one of the court-guard, and has had the boldness to contradict the Grand Duke's first officer, our Bojar Wuisnatta! Hear, thou little perversity! if thou dost not give over whimpering, and prating such silly stuff, we will soon put thee on one side, my dove,—dost know whither? In the kitchen, or in the wash-house. If thou wilt not be mistress, why, we will make thee housemaid.

NADJEZHDA.

O, do! show me the favour! fulfil thy promise! send me whither thou wilt; I will serve thee where it pleases thee; I know several handi-

works; can embroider in gold and silver; I will do all that is required of me—will work from morning till evening; weave by night, and make myself a slave of your slaves: only show me not to Prince Sswjätoszlav! Oh! be generous! refuse me not—and I will ever pray God for thee!—

BUSZLAJEVNA.

The dear little simpleton!—'T is plain she is quite out of her wits with terror!—Hush, hush, my sorrowing bird! Wait only a little time; when thou hast once accustomed thyself to our way of life, it will soon become pleasant. Ah! that I could amuse thee with anything, my sad little cuckoo!—Wait, wait! (*The voice of the singing TAROPKA is heard.*) Is not that my merry-maker? Quite right, it is he!—Wait here, my beauty! I will bring thee such a singing bird, as thou canst not help listening to.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

NADJEZHDA (*alone*).

And so all my hope is gone like a dream!—
Long already have I been familiar with sorrow—
but to part from thee for ever, my beloved!—
Wszeszlav, Wszeszlav!—O that I had never
known thee!

AIR.

Gladly, gladly plays the sunbeam,
All things triumph in its glow :
Only I alone, the blissless,
Joy and gladness never know!

All my life the sad hours
Here in sorrow I spend ;
And no more I behold
The beloved, the friend !
No longer I hasten
The dear way to meet him ;
No more in sweet accents
Familiarly greet him.

Ah ! beautiful lot !

Never destined for me,
Whom destiny parts
For ever from thee !

Only one farewell love-token—

Ah, how happy should I be !
All my sorrow would be lightened,
And my bursting heart be free.
What though destiny divide us,
I am thine for evermore ;
Over love so strong as mine is,
Separation has no power ;
Nay, not even when hope withers,
And the dream of bliss is o'er !

All my life the sad hours

Here in sorrow I spend ;
And no more I behold
The beloved, the friend !
No longer I hasten
The dear way to meet him ;
No more in sweet accents
Familiarly greet him.

Ah! beautiful lot!
Never destined for me,
Whom destiny parts
For ever from thee!

SCENE III.

NADJEZHDA, BUSZLAJEVNA, and TAROPKA.

BUSZLAJEVNA.

Come hither, come hither, my blue dove!

NADJEZHDA (*perceiving Taropka*).

Ah!

(TAROPKA gives her a sign to be silent.)

BUSZLAJEVNA.

What ails thee, my beauty?

NADJEZHDA.

O, nothing, mother.—You came upon me suddenly, and so I was frightened.

BUSZLAJEVNA.

Now, see here, Taropka, our new guest!
Come, sing something to cheer her up; only do
thy business well, thou loud-billed nightingale!

TAROPKA.

Well, mother Buszlajevna, we will sing, and if
thou, fair maid—I know not thy name—dost
love merry songs, then will my song go to thy
heart. How shall I begin?—Wait! (*Sings.*)

Weep not, weep not, my lovely maid!
Wet not thy cheek with tears!
Yet lives, yet lives thy beloved friend——

BUSZLAJEVNA.

O, now just leave off! What a song that is!
That will make her sad—won't it, my beauty?

NADJEZHDA.

No, mother; the song pleases me.

TAROPKA.

If thou wilt, Buszlajevna, I will sing thee

another song. Only do not interrupt me again, or I will sing no more at all. Now, listen!

SONG.

Hark, how softly blows the wind,
Murmuring gently through the wood;
Through the tangled brake it steals,
Through the twinkling leaves it rustles,
O'er the waving meadows skims;
Now it wafts refreshing coolness,
Pipes now like the nightingale—
Bearing on to the beloved
News from her true love.
And it whispers in her ear:—

“Sorrowful the brave youth was,
But his comrade rescued him.
Fear thee not, O thou my joy!
Sorrow, O my beauty, not—
The evil eye does not espy
The safe retreat where I do lie!”

BUSZLAJEVNA.

Give over, Taropka, be still! This song also is not after my heart.—What good is there in it, I wonder?

NADJEZHDA (*aside*).

He lives!—Oh! I thank thee, thou Most High!

TAROPKA.

What good is there in it?—O!—Sing thyself then, if thou understandest it better!

BUSZLAJEVNA.

Nay, do not be angry all at once!

TAROPKA.

Angry, or not angry, I will sing no more.

BUSZLAJEVNA.

Why, what ails thee, my red sun?—Now, prithee, prithee, sing one more!

TAROPKA.

No, mother, sing thyself.

TRIO.

BUSZLAJEVNA.

Be not angry, sing one more,
What thou wilt, I 'll not gainsay.

TAROPKA.

No, I 'll sing no more to-day!

BUSZLAJEVNA.

Why, but friend——

TAROPKA.

I will not sing.

NADJEZHDA.

How does anxious fear fly through me!

BUSZLAJEVNA.

And I love thee so sincerely!

TAROPKA.

Grateful am I for it truly;
But I 'll sing no more to-day.

NADJEZHDA (*aside*).

Liv'st thou, O mine eyes' delight !
Thank the eternal God for that !

BUSZLAJEVNA.

Friend, I 'll give thee a kaftan,
Gold and silk, for thy reward ;
Then shalt thou, no common man,
Go appavelled like a lord !

TAROPKA.

Thank thee for thy splendid pay,
But I 'll sing no more to-day !

BUSZLAJEVNA.

Thou shalt have sweet drink and food,
Beer and grits, if thou 'lt obey.

TAROPKA.

Mother, thou art quite too good ;
But I 'll sing no more to-day !

BUSZLAJEVNA.

Leave thy humour—one more lay ;
Come, friend, sing.

TAROPKA.

No more to-day!

BUSZLAJEVNA.

Nay, but, friend, I will not bring
Reproach again—

TAROPKA.

I will not sing.
If my singing gives thee pleasure,
Why didst thou disturb my lays?

BUSZLAJEVNA.

Nay, but I was only joking!
For thy songs are past my praise.

NADJEZHDA.

How does hope, with sudden rays,
Wrap my senses in amaze!

BUSZLAJEVNA.

Now, come, be no longer moody! sing us just
one more!

TAROPKA.

No, no! not for all the world!

BUSZLAJEVNA.

Now, what an obstinate baboon!

TAROPKA.

Let not that ruffle thee—I have been so from a child. But what a pretty song it would have been! I have only sung you the beginning; it goes on to relate how a fair maiden sits at a window and waits for her beloved; how he comes to her in the evening to deliver her; how he carries her off from the high tower, and flies with her to the end of the world.—But how pretty the end is!—The end! Ah! all the rest is nothing to it. But thou wouldst not even hear it.

BUSZLAJEVNA.

But who could think thou wert such an unfeeling monster!—And there is much that is unlikely in thy song!—There he stands boasting and making himself great, as if he were a Solowéi Budimirowitsh!—But what is there in the song?—Nonsense!—Come, my dove! The sun is already gone down—it is time to go in.

Now, only look at that Bojar! The fellow makes believe he won't hear!—Now, what art thou chattering about so glibly? There are plenty of fellows like thee to be found idling about everywhere!—Why dost thou wait? Come, my child! But be careful how thou whinest so again, else I will bring thee to quiet with the fist!

[*Exit with NADJEZHDA.*

SCENE IV.

TAROPKA and the WATCHMAN on the wall.

TAROPKA.

Wszeszlav has probably been in the wood long since.—Well, the plan is made, but how to carry it out? I think Nadjézhda has understood me. But there stands the damned watchman in the way—that's a thorn in the eye! • Holla, comrade!

THE WATCHMAN.

What wilt thou?

TAROPKA.

Nothing, friend! I only wanted to ask thee if thou art not tired of going backwards and forwards so, time after time?

WATCHMAN.

It 's my orders.

TAROPKA.

At night as well?

WATCHMAN.

At night we go two together.

●
TAROPKA.

Oho!—be damned! (*drawing a little flask from his pocket.*) How would it be, comrade, if thou wert to come down for an hour or so? we might drink a dram together!

WATCHMAN.

Thank thee, I don't drink!


TAROPKA.

Don't drink?—Ha! I see!

SCENE V.

THE SAME. WUISHATTA, SSADKO, JURKA, SERVANTS, WORKMEN *and* WORKWOMEN; *among the latter some old folk.*

WUISHATTA (*to the servants*).

Hearken, brothers! and all ye nurses, inspec-tresses, and workwomen! To-morrow, with day-break, comes our gracious lord, Grand Duke Sswjätoszlav Igorowitsh, hither to Prediszlavina, to amuse himself with hawking. See  it that everything be in good order, nice, clean, and comfortable; that there be no dust and dirt to be found anywhere.—Why how now!—Taropka Golowan! Art thou here? What has brought thee hither?

TAROPKA.

Ah! I have had a dull time of it, father! How long is it since I saw your honour?

WUISHATTA.

Thanks, brother!—Come to me a moment.
(*Steps somewhat forwards with TAROPKA.*)
Listen, Taropka! Have they not told thee what a piece of villany the Prince's page Wszezslav has done?

TAROPKA.

Yes, I have heard of it, Bojar, and cannot wonder enough at it!—What a mad devil!

WUISHATTA.

Already they have been seeking him for four-and-twenty hours, and he is nowhere to be found. Thou art strolling about everywhere, Taropka—hast thou heard by chance where he lies hidden?

TAROPKA,

No, Bojar, I have asked nobody about him—
What does it concern me?

WUISHATTA.

Ha! what art thou babbling now? It seems thou lovest him?

TAROPKA.

How am I to express myself, your honour? I have not much reason to love him; he has shown no love to me; my songs do not please him—and I have never had a friendly word from him in my life. And so, I say, it's no concern of mine. He who is rich and generous, who hears my songs gladly, and is not sparing of his money, he it is who is friendly to me; and him who is friendly to me I love.

WUISHATTA.

Where can the fellow be lurking? It is as if the earth had swallowed him up! But we shall find thee, thou robber! Messengers are sent out in all directions, and if he remains anywhere in the neighbourhood of Kiev, we shall soon come upon his track. I have an old female friend of the name of Wachraméjevna; they say she is a witch, and I believe she is myself. She knows all the secrets of the heart! If Wszeszlav is not caught to-day, I go to-morrow to her myself; and she will show me with the finger where he

is skulking, even if it were at the bottom of the sea. But see! the sun is already quite gone down. Go ye, and report if everything is in order in the Prince's sleeping chamber. Who knows whether our gracious lord, the Grand Duke, may not spend a night here? But do thou, Taropka, entertain the Court until I send for thee to me.

TAROPKA.

Willingly, Bojar! It always delights me to do such worthy people a pleasure.

[*Exit* WUISHATTA.

●
●
SCENE VI.

TAROPKA, SSADKO (*an ugly hump-backed old man*), JURKA, and the rest.

TAROPKA.

Now, what are ye for, children? Will ye have a song, or shall I tell you a tale? Bah, bah, bah! See there, my beloved friend, Master

Ssadko! Pretty sound and cheerful, my heart?
Come, brother! (*drawing him forwards by the hand.*) Relax a little! Let us see thee ogle!
Where, I wonder, are such graces bred?

(*All laugh.*)

SSADKO (*interrupting*).

Get thee hence, jackdaw! Joke with those
that joke with thee.

TAROPKA.

Now, do not be angry, my red sun!

JURKA.

What a brawler the fellow is! At first he is
quite still; then suddenly he singles out one!
And he always makes an attack on thee!.

SSADKO.

On me?—Ah, thou cursed fiddler! Take heed
to thyself that I do not make an attack on thy
back.

TAROPKA.

To make an attack on my back is not difficult, my dear ; thou mayst take a walk upon it, as on the plain ; but the devil himself would find it hard to make an attack upon thine ; for thou art barricaded behind and before !

SSADKO.

Take heed to thyself, Jack-pudding !

JURKA.

Now, quiet, quiet ! What ails thee, brothers ? Provoke him not, Taropka ! 'T is being a troublesome guest ! Rather tell us a tale.

TAROPKA.

Willingly, friends ;—there is no need of many ceremonies, if ye will only listen ! But do not crowd so together there, brothers ! Place yourselves with your faces towards me, on this side here.—That's the way (*placing them all against the wall*). “Persuasion is better than money.”* Now attend, if ye would hear !

* Russian proverb.

JURKA.

Silence, silence, stop the noise !

TAROPKA (*takes the Balaléika, and plays a few airs*).

Tram ! Tram ! Tram ! O ye merry lads with grey hair ! I have a tale for you which the old women say is a true story ; a learned old cat told it to me, and a sly old fox whispered it to her. Now, listen to my story, ye good people, and lads, and fair maidens ! (*Turning to an old woman.*) But thou, old granny, ogle not with young fellows ! My story thou canst listen to, but throw no stolen glances at me ! (*All laugh.*)

THE OLD WOMAN.

O thou impudent rascal ! What would he say behind one's back !

TAROPKA.

Shall I relate to you, children, how the brave youth Wszemil rescued his beloved, the charming maiden Ljubashenka, from the villanous hands of the Slavic Bojar Karatshun, who had carried her

away by cunning, and was going to marry her by force? (*Turning to the WATCHMAN.*) Holla, comrade! Listen thou to my tale with the rest! It will cost thee nothing to turn thy face this way and stand still for a few minutes.

WATCHMAN (*turning towards TAROPKA, and leaning on his pike*).

Willingly, friend; I like to hear a good tale.

TAROPKA.

Well, if thou wouldst hear one now, pay attention, my lad, look this way, and do not be staring about in all directions! (*Moves his fingers over the strings of the Balaléika.*) Tram! tram! tram! The tale begins with a surprising account of sagacious monkey's, of hunting and shooting, of knightly adventures—but this is not the tale itself, but only the prelude; the tale comes after. Now listen!

FINALE.

CHORUS.

Stand round as he bids you,
And to him attend;
Let never a whisper
The singer offend.

TAROPKA.

Proud on steepy mountain-heights,
Close upon a Slavic town,
Lay the dwelling of the Bojar,
Of the mighty Karatshun.
Shut up in the terem's chamber,
Sighs a lovely maid forlorn;
And with sorrow, and with weeping,
See, her beauteous arms are worn!

• CHORUS.

Eh! 't will be a jolly tale.

TAROPKA.

Once, in the warm summer evening,
Sorrowful, with tearful eye,
Sat the lovely Ljubashenka,
At the window, late, alone.

•
And her gentle heart was heavy,
And the tears came bursting down;
Yet she sighed, and sorrowed vainly,
And her grief could find no end.

CHORUS.

Stilly, stilly, hush, attend!

(In the terem, on the side of the shrubbery, a window is opened; behind it is discovered NADJEZHDA.)

TAROPKA.

And her eye it wanders thither
Where her faithful Wszemil dwells—
Far beyond the lake of Ilmen,
There he dwells apart from her!
Now already fades the summer,
Tidings of him never come—
Has he then his bride forgotten,
Him do other arms enround?

CHORUS.

Hear the voice of golden sound!

TAROPKA.

Midnight comes—the tears are rolling
Down the wakeful countenance;

Hark ! a noise of tinkling horse-hoofs—

Yes—'t is he—she cannot err !

Nearer, nearer, on he gallops,

Light there 's none, and silence reigns,

Save where hungry wolves are howling,

Save where rears his prancing steed.

Now listen, brothers ! let no word escape you !

CHORUS.

Stand round as he bids you,

And to him attend ;

Let never a whisper

The singer offend !

TAROPKA.

The brave fellow looks round about—All is still ! He goes to the window and gives the concerted signal—thus : one—two—three.

(Claps his hands, and at the same instant appears Wszeszlav behind the wall, and plants a ladder to the terem; NADJEZHDA steps forth from the window ; he receives her, descends with her, and both disappear behind the trees. All this takes place while TAROPKA is singing his song).

Listen ! Listen !

Suddenly two other warriors,
Brave companions, show themselves—
Raise up to the terem-window
A tall ladder planted firm.
The Bojar long sunk in slumber,
And his servants sleeping too,
There was but the drowsy watchman
Yet awake and grumbling on.
Hark! the dogs are barking loudly—
And it wakens Karatshun—
Lo! his eye seeks Ljubashenka—
Hence—betrayal—search around!
Swift to horse—pursue, pursue them!—
Yet no trace can e'er be found.

Summer's over, no one longer
Goes a-berrying in the wood.

CHORUS.

What a song! now is 't not good?
Yes! Yes!
Summer's over, no one longer
Goes a berrying in the wood.

JURKA.

And so they got safe away?

TAROPKA.

Safe away!

SSADKO.

The watchman saw them not?

TAROPKA.

His face was turned.

WATCHMAN.

Hear, friend, the joke amuses me,
He was no doubt a man of straw?

TAROPKA.

Very like, as he neither heard nor saw!

JURKA.

But what was the end of the scheme they'd planned?

TAROPKA.

Wszemil had freed her; she gave him her hand;—
And he led her home, invited his friends,
Gave a jolly good feast; and so my tale ends!

(Begins to dance.)

And bowls full of wine went circling round,
And they danced on the hill with a jovial sound!

Hei! ho! ever so!

Round in a circle, round!

CHORUS.

Hei! ho! ever so!
Round in a circle, round!

ТАРОПКА.

The fathers danced with crooked knees,
The old women appeared in rouge.

Hei! ho! ever so!
Round in a circle, round!

CHORUS.

Hei! ho! ever so!
Round in a circle, round!

SCENE VII.

THE SAME. BUSZLAJEVNA.

BUSZLAJEVNA.

Ah! if I do not find her,
What will become of me!

CHORUS.

Say, mother dear, say quickly
What has been done to thee!

BUSZLAJEVNA.

O mischief, mischief! woe the day!

CHORUS.

Wherefore?

BUSZLAJEVNA. *

Nadjézhda's flown away!

CHORUS.

Nadjézhda flown away?

BUSZLAJEVNA.

She's gone, she's gone!

CHORUS.

O mischief, mischief! who could ever
Have guessed that it would turn out so?
'T will rouse the fierce Bojar Wuishatta,
And we shall all be hanged together!

TAROPKA.

She's lost her wits, the old rat has,
And only babbles nonsense!

SCENE VIII.

THE SAME. WUISHATTA.

WUISHATTA.

What noise is this that greets my ears?

CHORUS.

O, what a dire calamity!

WUISHATTA.

What is it?—tell me what has happened!

CHORUS.

Already we are doomed to die!

WUISHATTA (*to BUSZLAJEVNA*).

Now, Buszlajevna, wilt thou tell me

What all this noise and screaming mean?

BUSZLAJEVNA.

No, no, Bojar! I cannot tell thee

What has occurred—I never dare!

WUISHATTA.

At once the whole event declare!
Else I command to hang you all!

CHORUS.

Where, brothers, is the use of silence?
Know then: Nadjézhda's fled!

WUISHATTA (*confounded*).

Nadjézhda fled?—

BUSZLAJEVNA (*on her knees, sobbing*).

O mischief, mischief! woe the day!

CHORUS.

Destruction makes us all its prey!

TAROPKA.

O mischief, mischief! who could ever
Have thought that she would run away!

WUISHATTA (*in a fury*).

Haha! dost thou begin to whine?

(*To the WORKPEOPLE.*)

Go, find her out immediately—

And mark me ! if ye fail, ye die—

I'll have no mercy on you ! As

(*To BUSZLAJEVNA.*)

For thee, old croaker, I will have thee

Buried alive !

CHORUS.

Come, children, come quickly, let 's hasten, be speedy !

That Lord Wuishatta may not, *

With a word, in a moment, give orders to hang us,

To hang us all on the spot !

WUISHATTA.

Go, children, go quickly ! and money I'll give you

If ye bring her back to me,—if not,

I give the command in a moment to hang you,

To hang you all on the spot !

END OF ACT III.

FOURTH ACT.

The Stage represents the interior of an old Hut ; in a corner stands a great besom ; on a sideboard sits a great owl ; on the table a rough-haired cat ; in the middle of the Hut, over an iron fire-pan, hangs a cauldron ; before it stands WACHRAMEJEVNA, and stirs therein with a long ladle.

SCENE I.

CHORUS OF INVISIBLE SPIRITS.

Poison, boil, and seethe,

With a fatal charin—

Death to all that breathe,

Yet to us no harm !

WACHRAMEJEVNA.

(*Melodrama.*)

Hear ye me ! hear !

I have a hundred words,

One speech for them all ;

And of the hundred words

Three are forbidden me.

When I whisper the first,
 The earth rolls dizzily round ;
 When I utter the second,
 The flashing stars reel in their courses ;
 But when I mutter the third,
 Twenty sharp knives'
 Skip over each other,
 And the sun is darkened !

Hear ye me ! hear !

CHORUS OF INVISIBLE SPIRITS.

Poison, boil, and seethe,
 With a fatal charm—
 Death to all that breathe,
 Yet to us no harm !

WACHRAMEJEVNA.

Well, 't is soon ready ! Enough to destroy
 half Kiev.—Most obedient!—Who has a mind,
 let him step in—ready with our mixture to serve
 him ! Now we need only speak the word, and
 all is done !

But who drinks of it,

Food sicken him,
Sleep fly him!
The black pest,
Like the venomous asp,
Shrivel him up!
Corruption, like a grave-worm,
Gnaw him away while he lives!
Bitter grief
Break his heart piecemeal!
Blight seize him,
Like a tender plant!
Starvation waste him,
Like a hungry dog!
My sisters wild
Dance and revel around his grave;
Sing merrily there,
Spring lustily there,
Over his whitened bones!

CHORUS OF SPIRITS.

Round about
We 'll dance and shout,
Over his grave!
Merrily sing,
Lustily spring,
Over his bones!

(A knock at the door ; the fire-pan sinks.)

WACHRAMEJEVNA.

Hark! The watchman gives warning!—
Hoo! silence, vermin, silence! Oho! it begins
to smell Russian! Should not that be the Bojar
Wuishatta? (*The cat sets up her back, and
brushes herself with her tail; the owl claps her
wings, and both begin to glare with their eyes.*)
Hoo! hoo! ye there! Quiet! Meddle not with
what is ours!

SCENE II.

WACHRAMEJEVNA and WUISHATTA.

WUISHATTA.

Good day, mother!

WACHRAMEJEVNA.

Many thanks, father! Come nearer, be seated,
rest a little!

WUISHATTA.

Well, Wachraméjevna! . It has cost me some trouble to drag myself hither! .

WACHRAMEJEVNA.

But what, my spring-sun, brings thee to me?
Hast thou a request to make of me?

WUISHATTA.

Yes, yes, mother, a very important one!

WACHRAMEJEVNA.

What can it be? Hast thou got too deep in a pretty maiden's love? What matters that! We will try. If I do not charm her, I will uncharm thee.

WUISHATTA.

Ah, no! Wachraméjevna!

WACHRAMEJEVNA.

But what meanest thou, dear? It is better to remove the evil, than to perish in it.

WUISHATTA.

I come not on account of such things! We lost something yesterday at Prediszlavina.

WACHRAMEJEVNA.

Ah! is it so?

WUISHATTA.

The fairest pearl of the Grand Duke's treasure is spoiled and lost!

WACHRAMEJEVNA.

So!

WUISHATTA.

Yes, mother; last night our first beauty ran away; an outlawed youngster, for whom search is now being made in all directions, enticed her.

WACHRAMEJEVNA.

Why, what a trick! To carry off a beauty from Prediszlavina! Well, the lad must be a madcap!

WUISHATTA.

Is it not possible, mother, to find out where he now secretes himself with the ravished maiden?

WACHRAMEJEVNA.

But what is her name, Bojar?

WUISHATTA.

Nadjézhda.

WACHRAMEJEVNA.

Nadjézhda? Then is she not of our faith?

WUISHATTA.

No; she belongs to the Greek Church.

WACHRAMEJEVNA.

Ah, that is bad!

WUISHATTA.

What now, mother?

WACHRAMEJEVNA.

See'st thou—a Christian—that is bad! Water

being proof against enchantment, help must be sought from the Old One! But the hour is not always equal. When he begins to growl—Woe—Woe!

WUISHATTA.

What Old One?

WACHRAMEJEVNA.

Not thy business, father! And then there's no saying—twice death cannot come, once it must.—Well, come what will! I will try it! (*Takes a piece of charcoal from the table, and draws a circle with it on the floor.*) Place thyself in this circle, Bojar! So, so! But take heed to thyself that fear do not seize thee, and step not out of the circle!

WUISHATTA (*begins to be afraid*).

Ah, Wachramejevna! a strange feeling comes over me!

WACHRAMEJEVNA.

Fear not, Bojar! If thou standest pretty still, dost not stir, and askest no questions,

nothing will happen to thee. The Old One will do thee no harm; and all his little servants are under my hand.

WUISHATTA.

But look there, mother, look!

WACHRAMEJEVNA.

Fear not, I tell thee!

WUISHATTA.

But will not the witchery be soon over?

WACHRAMEJEVNA.

Hush!

O thou dread God, whom mortals call the Black *!
Portentous Ruler of eternal Night!

Whom none, without a shudder, in the stillness
Of desolate night, can call by name! Incline
Thyself to me, when my request I whisper—

* * * * *

* Tshornobog: the Black God; Bjélobog: the White God.

O hear me! and reveal to us thy might;
 Now may the sun withdraw his shining light,
 And the fresh morning change to murky night!

(Silence.—The stage begins to be darkened.)

Amid the clouds now let the storm career;
 Leave thou thy castle to attend my prayer;
 Within thy circle let the truth appear—
 O hasten, hasten, dread black God, draw near!

(A thunder-clap. Soft harmonious music.)

CHORUS OF INVISIBLE SPIRITS.

Vanish solitary walls!
 Distance, show thyself to view!
 Priceless words be wafted hither
 On the storm-wind's wings!

(The back wall of the Hut disappears, and through a gauze is revealed to the view a wild spot on the bank of the Dnjepr. In the distance Kiev. At the foot of a high rock stand WSZESZLAV and NADJEZHDA.)

WUISHATTA.

Ha, what do I see!

WACHRAMEJEVNA.

Hush!

WSZESZLAV (*behind the gauze*).

No, for us there is no rescue,
From the evils that impend!

NADJEZHDA.

Fear not, God will be our helper,
And to us deliverance send!

WSZESZLAV.

Sad I see the future dawning—
And our star of hope is dim!

NADJEZHDA.

Yet in God we'll trust securely—
Oh! 'tis well to trust in Him!

(A thunder-clap. The phenomenon vanishes. The thunder continues to roll, and the storm grows stronger every minute.)

WACHRAMEJEVNA.

How now, Bojar? Is it they?

WUISHATTA.

Yes, mother, it is!

WACHRAMEJEVNA.

Hast thou also narrowly observed the place?

WUISHATTA.

Fully, mother! the spot is well known to me;
just close by Askold's grave.

WACHRAMEJEVNA.

Quick then, fetch warriors; but tarry not,
Bojar, else they will escape thee.

WUISHATTA.

I go, I go! Ugh! how grizzly it is, mother!
No moonlight to be seen!

WACHRAMEJEVNA.

Did I not tell thee: thou must disquiet the
'Old One; but when once he begins to growl, look
to thyself!

WUISHATTA.

But to Prediszlavina is no short distance.

WACHRAMEJEVNA.

Wait, father! Follow me; I will show thee a path that shall bring thee to Prediszlavina in a moment.

WUISHATTA.

Come, mother, come!

SCENE III

Complete change. The stage represents a wild spot on the bank of the Dnjepr, a part of which has already been visible through the gauze. WSZESZLAV and NADJEZHDA stand at the foot of the rock, on whose summit stands TAROPKA.

WSZESZLAV.

Now, how is it, Taropka?

TAROPKA.

All right, all right! now we are once on the bank—all right! (*Descends from the rock.*)

WSZESZLAV.

Heaven be praised! We are rescued!

NADJEZHDA.

But my father?

WSZESZLAV.

O, we shall see him again, Nadjézhda! He will find out our place of refuge, and then remain with us for ever.

SCENE IV.

THE SAME. • THE UNKNOWN (*coming forth from behind the rock.*)

THE UNKNOWN.

Quick, Wszezslav, quick! On the Dnjepr a

faithful band awaits us, and in a few days we shall be in the Petschenägian camp.

WSZESZLAV.

Make haste, Nadjézhda!

THE UNKNOWN.

Stay! First thou must swear that thou wilt rise up against Sswjätoszlav, and change thy faith, which has transformed thee, the bold warrior, into a child of slavery.

NADJEZHDA.

Merciful God!

WSZESZLAV.

How! I lift the sword against my Prince and benefactor! I deny the Lord!

FINALE.

THE UNKNOWN.

Thou must the Christian faith forswear,
And wrest from Sswjätoszlav his land.

WSZESZLAV.

Shall I the Russian sceptre bear ?

No ! let him keep it in his hand !

THE UNKNOWN.

O shame !

WSZESZLAV.

Can I forget the good

I owe to him ? I never can !

THE UNKNOWN.

Think thou of justice ! blood for blood !

Revenge thyself, and be a man !

NADJEZHDA.

O my beloved ! let him not blind thee !

Believe him not, he means it ill !

The wrath of God and man will follow

The soul that does the tempter's will !

THE UNKNOWN.

Inevitably ye will perish ;

Never again your joys arise ;

Thou fall'st!—and she whom thou dost cherish,
 In vilest bondage fades and dies!
 When yet thou mightst as ruler flourish,
 If thou wouldst strike the righteous blow!

NADJEZHDA.

O Wszeszlav! fear his tempting word!
 Eternal life dwells not below!

THE UNKNOWN.

Misfortune's arrows swift pursue thee—
 Wszeszlav, thou wilt be thy own foe!

NADJEZHDA.

Ah! like the Evil One he tempts thee—
 Believe him not, he is our foe!

TAROPKA (*coming from behind the scenes*).

Up! children, save yourselves, be speedy!
 Wuishatta with his band approaches!

WSZESZLAV and NADJEZHDA.

O, woe to us!

TAROPKA.

O hasten!

WSZESZLAV *to* NADJEZHDA.

Come, love, we'll go together !

THE UNKNOWN.

Whither ?

Ye have no hope, then linger !

Here shall misfortune seize you !

TAROPKA (*looking into the distance*).

O hasten!—There he comes already !

THE UNKNOWN.

One moment more—

The strife is o'er !

WSZESZLAV *and* NADJEZHDA.

One moment more—

The strife is o'er !

THE UNKNOWN.

For the last time ! Death or a throne ?

Wilt thou rise up 'gainst Sswjätoszlav,

Abandon thy religion ?

NADJEZHDA.

My God! O strengthen thou Wszezslav!

CHORUS (*behind the scenes*).

Here, comrades, follow me swift along—

We are soon at Askold's grave!

THE UNKNOWN.

Hear'st thou, Wszezslav?

TAROPKA.

O, woe is me!

THE UNKNOWN.

Quick, let me have thy final answer—

Thou hearest thy pursuers' voices—

Say, wilt thou go with me?

• WSZESZLAV.

No! yonder Heaven it is I choose,

I'll serve my God unalterably!

THE UNKNOWN.

Then be accursed, thou abject soul!

And die! A certain death awaits thee!

[*Exit.*

CHORUS (*behind the scenes*).

Here, comrades, follow me swift along—

We are soon at Askold's grave!

NADJEZHDA.

We are lost! But thou hast held out, Wszeszlav—Thanks be to the Most High!

WSZESZLAV.

Let us hasten up this rock; and if no hope at all remains, we will throw ourselves into the Dnjepr: perhaps the Lord will save us; perhaps I may save thee, Nadjézhda!

NADJEZHDA.

But if not—what then my soul's delight?—
Rather death, than sorrow and separation from thee!

(*They ascend the rock; the storm increases.*)

SCENE V.

THE SAME. WUISHATTA *and* WARRIORS.

WUISHATTA.

Halt, children! There they are!

NADJEZHDA.

Quick, my friend! quick! There (*pointing to the Dnjepr*) shall we be wedded, and the Dnjepr shall be our bridal bed!

WUISHATTA.

Surrender, robber!

SCENE VI.

THE SAME. STEMID, *followed by* ALEXEI,
FISHERS, *and all the Christians.*

STEMID (*to WUISHATTA and the WARRIORS*).

In the name of the Grand Duke—stop!

ALEXEI.

Nadjézhda ! my daughter !

STEMID.

Wszeszlav ! thou art pardoned !

WSZESZLAV *with* NADJEZHDA (*coming down
from the rock*).

Is it possible ?

STEMID.

And our lord, the Grand Duke, permits thee
to marry thy bride.

WUISHATTA.

How ? What ?

STEMID.

Simple as possible, Bojar : I have thrown
myself at the Grand Duke's feet, and told him
all. He was moved by my tears, and gave up
to him Nadjézhda.

WUISHATTA.

The devil ! But is all that true ?

STEMID.

I stand not in thy shoes, Bojar ; lies are not my business.

WUISHATTA.

Well, if it is so, we have nothing to do here ; and look ye, the weather, too, has cleared up ! Home ! children !

[Exeunt WUISHATTA and WARRIORS.]

ALEXEI (*embracing NADJEZHDA and WSZESZLAV*).

Nadjézhda ! Wszesvlav ! we are again united ! —again happy !

(THE UNKNOWN *appears in his boat in the midst of the river. Prodigious storm.*)

FIRST FISHER.

Look, who is there on the Dnjepr ?

SECOND FISHER.

There seems to be somebody in the boat

Only see how it tosses ! There will be mischief done !

FIRST FISHER.

That is not surely the very same—dost thou still remember how he told us all about Askold ?

SECOND FISHER.

Yes, yes ! it is the same ! Now, brother, he will not make better of it !

TAROPKA.

Ah, see ! that is my Bojar !

WSZESZLAV *and* NADJEZHDA.

It is he !

TAROPKA.

Ah ! see my Bojar,
Now thou art in distress !

WSZESZLAV.

Alas ! on the water
He combats with death !

NADJEZHDA *and* ALEXEI.

O Father! in mercy,
The judgment withhold!

CHORUS.

O, see how the waters
Upbubble and roar!
How with foam of the billow
The boat whitens o'er!
In vain all endeavour,
It reels to and fro—

*(The lightning strikes the boat; it disappears in
the waves.)*

See, see, with a gurgle,
It plunges below!

(NADJEZHDA to WSZESZLAV.)

He is sunk, yet we are happy!
O my Wszeszlav! Righteous God!

ALEXEI

God is great—thank Him for ever!

Let us all his grace implore

That He would the light of truth
On our future princes pour—
So shall we with joy together
Praise and bless him evermore!

GENERAL CHORUS.

Help Lord ! thy providence we hail !
Preserve the Czar the Ruler's crown ;
Nor let the might of foes prevail
O'er Russian land and our renown.

APPENDIX OF NOTES.

APPENDIX OF NOTES.

VOL. I.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE 4.

1. To the Kartvelshian race belong:—

- a.* the Georgians.
- b.* the Imerians.
- c.* the Gurians.
- d.* the Mingrelians.
- e.* the Suanians (Suanetes).

All these peoples are branches of one stock, and, together with many others, once formed a great political body, of which the Georgians were the head. The languages likewise which they speak are daughters of one mother, the Georgian; whose dominion, during the short period of Georgia's bloom, extended from the Black to the Caspian Sea, from the Terek to the Araxes. The differences which have arisen in the course of centuries among the peoples of

the Kartvelshian family, in language, physiognomy, and manners, are the natural result of their geographical position, as well as of the influence to which they were exposed by continual contact with the warlike neighbouring races. On this subject see "The People of the Caucasus," Frankfort on the Maine, p. 43.

2. "The oldest Greece, and the oldest Grecian (I do not say Hellenic) towns are not to be sought for in the Peloponnesus, nor in Attica or Doris, but in the valleys of the Caucasus; where we likewise first discover the names Aethiopia, Europe, Libya, and most of the appellations of the rivers and districts of the subsequent European Greece (Kanngiesser Alterthumswissenschaft (Knowledge of Antiquity), tom. ii. p. 161). Here on the sea-coast was Trebizond, one of the earliest foundations of the old Pelasgian Greeks; and Eugenicus of Byzantium, and Bessarion of Trebizond, declare a great truth when they style it the oldest and most famous city of the East (in the Grecian sense). To determine the precise period of its first foundation is a chronological impossibility. It falls far beyond the circle of authentic history over into the region of fable and tradition; when swamp and forest covered the surface of Europe, then a waste, or affording a miserable habitation to savages; and when the valleys of the Caucasian isthmus might have been called the Occident of the human race, its western centre of civilization, whose little States, as years elapsed, discharged their superfluous population into the void and

unknown tracts beyond. That these immigrants frequently carried over, with their manners and customs, the appellations likewise of the towns, rivers, mountains, and districts of their native land, into the place of their new abode, lies in the nature of a settlement in a foreign country, and is also sufficiently established by the fact that the names of towns and districts commonly appearing in the Caucasus, occur again along the whole mountain chain which extends from the Black Sea to the southern point of the Peloponnesus on the one hand, and to the Pillars of Hercules on the other." — Fallmerayer, *Geschichte des Kaiserthums von Trapezunt* (History of the Empire of Trebizond). München, 1827, p. 3.

CHAPTER V.

Page 75.

3. Like the present title of Prince, the previous title of Count in the family of Woronzov is of recent origin. It is well known that the policy of the house of Romanov has always been to break the power and influence of the old Russian nobility, and to form in its place a new aristocracy more willing to serve dogmatic interests. Until Peter I. the title of Prince might only be borne by such families as were descended from really sovereign houses. Peter I. was the first Russian Czar who created princes, counts, and barons. The two last titles were until then altogether unknown in Russia. The first Russian raised to the rank

of Prince was the celebrated Menshikov, whom the Emperor Leopold I. (1705) rewarded with the dignity of a German, and Peter I. (1707) with that of a Russian prince. The first Russian count was Field-Marshal Sheremétjev (1706), and the first Russian baron, Vice-Chancellor Shafirov (1710).

CHAPTER VII.

Page 181.

4. Glebov's letter, written in French, and interspersed with some Russian phrases, here follows, without any alteration of the grammatical inaccuracies therein occurring.

“ Ce 9 Octobre, 1843.

“ MON CHER BIBIKOFF!

“ Je crains que ce billet ne tombe dans les mains de cet animal Attachikoff, car il m'est défendu d'écrire autrement qu'en russe. J'ai éprouvé les sensations d'être fouetté, même plusieurs fois; vous concevez donc bien d'où vient cette crainte. Nogaika ne sswoi bratj*. Voilà les prix marqués par ces gueux pour notre délivrance; ma personne est estimée à deux mille roubles argent; votre garçon cent roubles argent. Ils ont baissé furieusement le prix, mais auparavant le dégagement, ou plutôt le rachât, s'élevait à 15,000 roubles. Ils céderont encore. Si on pouvait ar-

* The whip is not my brother; *i. e.* I do not like to have anything to do with it.

ranger un échange on troque contre les prisonniers qui se trouvent chez nous? Cela ne serait pas mal. Mais au plus vite! car cette maudite existence, avoir bras et jambes liées, cravate de fer au cou, tout cela, vous conviendrez, ne présente pas beaucoup d'agréments; d'ailleurs, se trouver sous la dépendance de ce misérable Attachikoff me rend la vie plus que dure. Comme de raison, tout ce que je possédais, l'argent ainsi que les papiers sont tombés dans les pattes de ce traître, décachetés et lus, outre le rapport dans lequel il s'agissait de Salitoff, que j'ai brûlé, et encore un assignat de cent roubles. Cet argent appartenait probablement à Alexandre Ivanovitsch; je l'ai fourré sous le pan de mon surtout, le seule vêtement qui me reste. D'abord j'ai cru que le contenu de ces papiers produirait un certain effet. Non! après les avoir lu, il me demandait: Tolko to? Pokloniss pokornéïshe Alexander Ssemenowitsh*, et prie le, mon cher ami, d'être mon défenseur auprès d'Alex. Ivanowitsch †. Il pourrait croire, que j'ai été fait prisonnier faute de mon étourderie. Je n'avais pas de convoi,

* Merely this? Greet most humbly Alexander Ssemenowitsh.—General Traskin is here meant, who was, at that time, chief of the staff at Tiflis. Traskin subsequently fell into disgrace, and was removed, for punishment, to become curator at the university of Charkov.

† Herr von Neidhart, then Commander-in-Chief, is here meant.

oui mais qui aurait pu croire qu'à 40 verstes de Stavropol, en plein jour, sur la grande route, les brigands pourraient me saisir! Jamais cette idée ne m'est venue, surtout à moi, qui ai fait cette route peut-être une vingtaine de fois. Durant mon séjour ici j'ai amassé des connaissances des nouvelles, que je vais vous donner : j'ai traversé le pays des Cabardiens fugitifs; j'y rencontrais nos soldats, et c'est de ces fuyards que j'ai pris ces renseignements; quelques uns des habitants m'ont récité la même chose. Chamil a l'intention de tomber avec toutes ses forces sur la petite Cabarda; les Abaséks doivent le secourir de ce côté, car il n'attend que le moment favorable pour exécuter son projet; au reste, ce n'est pas une nouvelle, on s'attend à cela depuis très-long temps. Quant au secours des Abaséks—Nu gdjé mnjé durakim pitj tshai—da jeshtsho zwétnuy*? Encore une prière: n'oubliez pas de rappeler Verbitzky au souvenir d'Alexandre Ssemenovitsch. Brata ne sabütj†.

“ Tout à toi,

“ MICHEL.

“ Je serais resté ici en cas que les autorités trouveraient utile la prolongation de mon séjour dans ce pays. En tout cas je voudrais bien retourner.”

* Where shall I, poor fellow, now drink tea—and still more flower-tea?

† Do not forget (to greet) my brother.

CHAPTER VIII.

Page 208.

5. Lokman is become a mythical personage; who, in some parts of the East as the embodiment of all wisdom, in others as the embodiment of all healing power, still lives in the mouth of the people. My own experience has convinced me that in the Christian provinces of the Caucasus, among the Georgians and Armenians, where the name of Lokman is on the lips of every child, nothing is known of the Arabian tradition of Lokman Abu Anam, but that the name is derived from a certain German physician who is said to have lived in the Caucasus many centuries ago, and to have been famed far and wide for his wonderful cures.

Abovian of Erivan, who was thoroughly versed in the Armenian and Tartar languages, but entirely unacquainted with the Arabian literature, wrote to me respecting the allusions to Lokman occurring in the songs of Keshish Oglu literally what follows:—

“The name of Lokman plays the same part in the Asiatic languages as that of Hippocrates in the European. If a physician has accomplished a fortunate cure, he is a true Lokman! say the people. If any one is afflicted with a serious disease, none but a Lokman can heal him! is the cry. You hear this name daily so used among the Islamitish as well as among the Christian population of the country, and, indeed, among the lowest classes of the people, with-

out any one being able to give a satisfactory account of the origin of the name. The child has received it from the mother, and the mother from the grandmother. What I can tell you of the matter is this. In all probability a German physician Hoffmann is meant, whose name the Tartars and Armenians, by a pronunciation more suited to themselves, have changed into Lokman. This Hoffmann is said—God knows when, but no very great while ago—to have lived in the Caucasus and performed great and wonderful cures, so that his fame resounded through all Asia, and obliged him to take long journeys to heal the sick. The following anecdote is still related of him at Tiflis. When Lokman had arrived at this city, and was proceeding to the bazaar, an endless succession of high-laden arabas (two-wheeled wag-gons) blocked up his way. Lokman inquired what was contained in these arabas. He was answered—Fish. “Then,” said he, “there will be plenty for me to do here!” And so saying, he turned into another street. But here likewise his way was blocked up by an endless succession of arabas high-laden with filled leather-bags. Lokman inquired what was contained in these leather-bags. He was answered—Wine. “Then,” said he, “here is no abiding for me! Where so good a medicine is present in such abundance, the physician’s art is superfluous.” And so saying, he left the town with a sorrowful countenance.

This story, exactly as here related, I frequently heard afterwards at Tiflis. It is there impressed on the people

more strongly than almost any other tradition of the East. Among the Tiflisian wine-drinkers it is a current saying: "If Lokman Hekim (Physician Lokman) called wine the best remedy for fish-diseases, how shall not the wisdom of the Georgians be praised, who habituate their children, from their youth up, to the enjoyment of wine!"

Certain it is, that in Georgia the children often begin to drink wine in their cradles.

* * * * *

Having given this Georgic-Armenian version of the Lokman-tradition (for nothing that is known of Lokman deserves the name of history), I owe it to the great majority of my readers to return to the Arabian tradition of Lokman, according to which, Lokman Abu Anam, with the surname Al Hakim (according to the Turkish pronunciation Hekim), *i. e.* the Wise (which includes the idea of the knowledge of medicine), was the only righteous person in the tribe of Ad, and therefore remained alive when this was extirpated by God. The choice was given him by God, whether he would live as long as the dust of seven gazelles would last in a mountain-cavern, or as seven vultures would live that followed one after another. Lokman Abu Anam chose the latter, and lived to the time of David, nay, according to other accounts, to the time of the prophet Jonas. And he had his dwelling at Ramah near to Jerusalem, where he also lies buried.

According to other Arabian writers, Lokman was a wise man highly skilled in the knowledge of law, and living as judge in the land until the time of David, the minstrel-king. Other traditions make him a carpenter; and others, again, a fugitive slave from Egypt, of swarthy complexion, with thick lips and bow-legs. In this way the conjectures go on into infinity.

It is well known that Lokman, as the Oriental fabulist, is held by some learned authorities (among others, Ch. A. Neumann) to be identical with *Æsop*, most of the Arabian fables being similar to the Greek. Did the Greeks, now, derive their fables from the Arabs, or the Arabs from the Greeks? Did *Æsop* live before Lokman, or Lokman before *Æsop*? Is the Lokman of tradition identical with the Lokman of the Koran, &c., &c.? On all these dubious points a multitude of learned treatises have been written, into which we cannot here enter more particularly.

We only remark, by way of conclusion, that the thirty-first Sure of the Koran bears the name of Lokman as its superscription, and that hence the conjecture certainly acquires some probability, that long before Mohammed there lived a man of the name of Lokman, whose wisdom gained for him renown in the land.

VOL. II.

CHAPTER I.

Page 49.

6. In the "Compendio Storico di Memorie Chronologiche concernanti la Religione e la Morale della Nazione Armena, etc. dal Marchese del Giovanni de Serpos," is found, t. iii. p. 171, sq. the following somewhat different account: "Giunti, che sono alla abitazione dello sposo, fanno sedere il marito sopra un soffà già preparato, ed alla sua destra vi adagiano sua moglie; e prendendo una bella coppa la empiono di vino, che viene benedetto dal sacerdote, il quale nella divote orazione, che dice in tale congiuntura, commemora il miracolo fatto da Gesù Christo nelle nozze di Cana, convertendo l'acqua in vino. Di tal vino così benedetto ne porge egli stesso a bere qualche torso a novelli conjugi, e suole anche loro darsi delle mandorle, ed alquanto d'una confezione fatta di burro, zucchero, e mele. Frattanto che si fa quest' allegria, si canta un divottissimo ritmo pieno di molti augurj di prosperità sì eterne, sì temporali, che a nome della Chiesa si fanno agli sposi, e dettasi

dal sacerdote in fine una breve orazione, ed il Pater noster, si dà termine per quel giorno alla funzioni ecclesiastiche, e tutti gli astanti baciano con divozione le corone degli sposi. Queste corone vengono da esso loro portate in capo per otto giorni, o per tre almeno, e in codesto tempo vivono separati e in perfetto celibato ”

With the last point agrees the description of a worthy old traveller of the seventeenth century, in a work bearing the title, “*Warhaffte und eigentliche Beschreibung des gegenwärtigen Zustandes deren unter der Türckischen Tyranny seufzenden Griechischen und Armenischen Kirchen, &c., &c.*,” where, p. 92, he says : “*Montags früh Morgends ist gemeiniglich die Zeit, da sie mit oder vor aufgehender Sonne die Hochzeiten zu halten pflegen. Das Fest beginnt Sonntags Abends, und wird drey oder vier Tag lang mit grossen Freuden fortgesetzt: welche Zeit die Braut fast immerdar in einem Sessel sitzt, und nicht schlaffen darff: so musz auch der Brautigam sich indessen ihrer enthalten, und ist ihme nicht eher, als erst Mittwochs Abends oder Donnerstags früh ihr ehlich beyzuligen erlaubt; worauf alsdann der Braut zungfrauschaft-Zeichen öffentlich vorgezeigt werden.*”

EXCURSUS.

EXCURSUS.

BY THE TRANSLATOR.

THE RUSSIAN POETRY AND LANGUAGE.

WHILST this work is going through the press, a long-looked for packet has reached me from the Author, some of the contents of which I must here communicate to his English readers.

A year ago, Dr. Bodenstedt withdrew from the editorship of the "Weserzeitung" at Bremen (to which he had been summoned from Berlin by powerful friends soon after the publication of the first part of the "Thousand and One Days"), in order to devote himself exclusively to literary objects, which, as he says, suit his taste better than "the sterile politics of the day."

Since then he has been residing in a country seat in the beautiful environs of Cassel, and has recently received an

•

invitation to become Professor of Oriental Literature in the University of Gottingen.

The songs of Mirza-Shaffy, collected by themselves in a handsome little volume, and set to music by the most famous of German composers, Louis Spohr, and others, have lived to see a second edition.

Of the "Thousand and One Days" two new editions, a larger and a smaller, are shortly to appear at once.

Of Bodenstedt's own epic and lyric poems, which appeared last summer, two editions were sold in four months. In a month or so, a new epic of his will leave the press. A translation of the poems of Lermontov, or, as it is now written, Lermontoff, has gained for Friedrich Bodenstedt additional fame in his fatherland. And his fertile pen is at present occupied with a drama entitled "Prince Hermann," which will be represented in Berlin next autumn.

A review of the Translation of Lermontoff, by a celebrated Slavonian scholar, is now before me; and from it I have copied the following paragraphs in English, as being not unsuitable by way of epilogue to a work which began with Lermontoff and ends with Sagoskin, while, in a poetical and philological point of view, they have an interest of their own.

"On the title-page • the translator sets forth with truth

• Michail Lermontoffs poetischer Nachlasz. Zum ersten Mal in den Versmaszen der Urschrift, mit Hinzufügung der

that Lermontoff's poems now appear for the first time in German. We may add, that Germany has received in Bodenstedt's translation for the first time a conception of Russian poetry. What we have hitherto possessed in this relation has been highly unsatisfactory. The few who have endeavoured to introduce Russian poets on German soil, have either made an imperfect selection, and wasted their labour on unimportant materials, whereof there is certainly great store in that quarter; or they have chosen the good and worthy, without possessing the power to render the same with skill. The last objection concerns, with rare exceptions, nearly all who have undertaken this confessedly difficult task. To those who with moderate talent have translated indifferent performances, belongs the now almost forgotten Karl Friedrich of the Borg, whose "*Poetische Erzeugnisse der Russen*" (*Poetical Productions of the Russians*. Dorpat, 1823), unfortunately fell in a time when the great poet-heroes, the three stars, Pushkin, Kolzoff, and Lermontoff, had not yet burst forth, or were only just rising. His selection, therefore, the only anthological work

bisher unveröffentlichten Gedichte, aus dem Russischen übersetzt von Friedrich Bodenstedt. Berlin, Decker. (Michail Lermontoff's "*Poetical Legacy*," translated from the Russian for the first time in the metre of the original, with the addition of hitherto unpublished poems. By Friedrich Bodenstedt.)

we can hitherto show, besides some readable fables of Kryloff, and several narrative pieces of Wassili Shukoffskoi, contains almost exclusively poems of the period when French taste ruled the Russian Parnassus, and called forth the most insipid productions. The Russian Muse was then the good old loquacious dame, in the French court-style, paying court submissively to every personage of rank and influence, toying in soft pastoral scenes, bringing forth poetical monstrosities, and endeavouring to play the Lafontaine and Boileau. Nay, more, she subsequently became, by the example of modern, and for the most part French philosophy, a wild romantic maid, who dared without the control of police to drink from the poetical fountains of all other peoples, and burned to expatiate without fetters and bands in the realm of unlimited fantasy. This resulted in a confused irregular action, wherein the true poetry always came off worst. The strict regulations of the Emperor Nicolas succeeded in sobering this Muse whom foreign wine had intoxicated, and not only cured her of her eccentricities and brought her home, but opened to her a new way, leading to springs of renovation: the way of the *national* and *Russian*. Thus was gained in depth and power what was lost in compass, and the new national school of poetry yielded in quick succession the three heroes, Pushkin, Lermontoff, and Kolzoff. On the last none of us Germans have hitherto ventured. Bodenstedt, perhaps, is the only one who would be likely to succeed in arraying this truly

national, and therefore hard to be translated poet, in a German dress, without losing the charm of his language, the harmony of his verses, the national enamel of his thoughts, which have made this genuine son of wide Russia a favourite in the cottage as in the palace.

“To the mighty Pushkin three have addressed themselves—Tietz, Wolkoff, and Lippert. It is to be remarked that these three attempts date from the strand of the Neva. All three are Russian subjects, for the Courlander of the Borg calls the Russian Czar his lord. Tietz and Wolkoff of Petersburg, the last a native Russian, have only translated, and the latter, indeed, with great ability, some of the minor narrative poems of Pushkin into German. One advantage they had over the third translator, Dr. Robert Lippert: they thoroughly understood the original text. Herr Lippert, on the contrary, proceeded to the translation of the most significant work of Pushkin, without being able to read the original. His wife, a talented Russian lady, who knew little of German, but perfectly understood French, translated for him, word for word, the Russian text into French, from which then Herr Lippert drew the material for his German version. Notwithstanding this method of origination, which was concealed from our knowledge, his translation is flowing, and in the more significant passages really soaring and powerful. The whole is, however, far from realizing to us the musical strength and greatness of the first Russian poet. By the side of the full-toned ori-

ginal, dipped in all colours of the richest fantasy, and rushing along in most resounding majesty, Lippert's imitation shows dull and feeble. So great, however, is the poetical might of this genius (Pushkin, not Lippert), that his works, dimmed by treble refraction, and copied in imperfect lines, still make the most powerful impression on the German reader, as every one who takes up Lippert's translation will confess. But come we to the subject of our remarks, viz. Lermontoff.

“ Although his principal work appeared in Russia fifteen years ago, and his fame had long been established in Russia, we Germans for a long time took no notice of this distinguished poet. Had it not been for König's excellent, but unfortunately too little circulated ‘ Characteristics of Russian Poets,’ many, who else believe themselves at home on all subjects, would scarcely have known him by name. Thus it happened, that a poet, whose name among our neighbours had already for a series of years belonged to the most renowned, and formed the pride of his country, was all but unknown to universal Germany. A people that enjoys the not unmerited distinction of having mastered, like no other nation, the intellectual products of all peoples, and unlocked the treasures of the world, and made them a common property, could not well let a poet-hero of such significance as Lermontoff escape it, without losing somewhat of its fame of manysidedness, of encyclopædian comprehensiveness and dominion.

“ In the Slavonian department, however, we Germans have never exceeded. With some exceptions of the Servian branch, whose lays and hero-songs have received the most elaborate treatment from Talvi, Gerhardt, Kapper, and others, we have given ourselves but little trouble about the languages of our Eastern neighbours. What are the spare translations by Swoboda, Wenzig, Hartmann, Kapper, of Düringsfeld, from the Bohemian,—what even the richly-flowing and in part masterly elaborations of Gaudy (Niemcewicz), Vogel (Malczeski), Spazier, Nabelak, Werner, Shwab (Mickiewicz), Batornizki, and others, from the Polish,—in comparison with the number of excellent poets yet untranslated? Nobody knows them, nobody reads them, not even those translated.

“ We should really do well to look round us here a little more, ere the Russian language, which receives so little attention among us at present, is rendered perhaps an official theme of instruction in our schools. And whoever does not feel constrained to do it from policy, let him do it out of love for a rich and singular literature, and for a flexible and interesting language. Already old Belius, in the Introduction to his ‘Grammatica Slavica,’ has said—what every one acquainted with these languages will subscribe, while others may be animated to the study of them by his words:—‘*Experiundo conductus sum, omnia Europæ linguarum decora non æmulari modo, sed vincere etiam unam Slavicam posse. Neque enim Hispaniæ gravitate majestate-*

que, blanditie et facilitate Galliae, Angliae sublimitate efficacitateque, Germaniae sensus et emphaseos ubertate, lenitate et suavitate Italiae, denique Hungariae imperiosa severitate, quidquam concedit.'

"Of the various languages of the Slavonian nations the Russian, again, it is which deserves the praise, and is worthy of special attention. It is graceful and lovely as the Polish; full of heroism, fire, and glow, as the Servian; it has the classical rhythm and flexibility of the Bohemian; and it surpasses them all in strength and majesty. It is the language of the future.

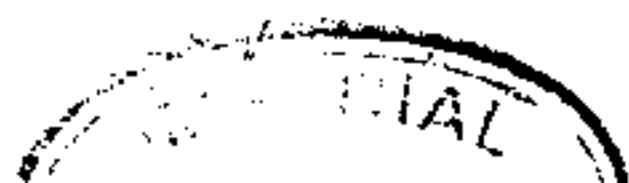
"Bodenstedt and Alexander Herzen were the first to turn all eyes to Lermontoff. The latter, in his admirable sketches of Russia (Kolatsheks Monatschrift, 1851, die ersten Hefte: Kolatshek's Monthly Journal, 1851, the first numbers), and Bodenstedt, in the first part of his classical book, 'Tausend und ein Tag im Orient.' The larger prose work also of Lermontoff, the novel, 'Petshorin, or the Duel in the Caucasus,' in the fluent translation of Herr Isidor Löwenstein, had been, since 1846, in the hands of the German public. All this called forth a manifold interest in the poet, whose changeful destiny, early violent death, and poetical peculiarities, were described to us by so eloquent a pen, and of whose talents Bodenstedt had given us a proof that raised the highest expectations. The translation, therefore, now before us, was an expected and highly-welcome gift. Welcome, at once because it appears at

a time when sympathy for the poet is fresh, but especially because it is the work of a man, who not only possesses the complete *technic* of translation, as well as a perfect knowledge, so rare among Germans, of Russian, but who is himself a poet, a youthful friend and confidant of Lermontoff, and is likewise in possession of many of Lermontoff's manuscript poems, some of which were suppressed by the Russian censorship, and some belong to his legacy. A singular fortune it was, that all these qualifications, which more or less were necessary to a complete translation of a poet of the first class, should meet together in Friedrich Bodenstedt, to furnish us, as we intimated at the outset, with the first good, and hitherto the best, translation of Russian verse in the German tongue. Bodenstedt stands in this field quite alone; and all that has hitherto been performed in this direction is cast by this performance into the deepest shade.

“ With truly poetic spirit has he mastered the thoughts of the fiery young Sarmatian—thoughts often strange and bold, and always rolling in the charm of a most resounding language—and transferred them in the same euphonious rhythms, and, where it appeared necessary, in the same marvellous arabesques and leaps of thought, to the German tongue. Much that ravishes the Russian in the original, could not of course be given again. To this belongs the creative might with which Lermontoff handles and impresses his mother-tongue, which, younger and fresher than the

German, encloses in itself the germs of the highest expansibility and perfection, and in the hands of an inspired artist becomes an instrument of endless melody. This, in a readier and older language like the German, whose opulence lies in quite another department, was not to be imitated, or even indicated. Here the poet's own creative power came to the aid of our translator. A second element was the potent euphony of the Russian verse in general, and of Lermontoff's poetry in particular. This rushes along as on angel's wings—roaring, fiery, with boundless swing and prodigious flight. What was possible to do here Bodenstedt has done, though the charm of the original language could only be rendered in faint resplendence.

“To give a minute criticism of the translation would be out of place here, since the Bremer press is as deficient in the necessary Russian types, as most of our friendly readers in the knowledge of the Russian tongue. Suffice it, therefore, to remark, that the larger poems are rendered with conscientious exactness, almost line for line, while the lesser are treated with greater freedom. This freedom, however, has not ventured so far in the poem entitled ‘Sehnsucht’ (Longing), vol. ii. p. 14, as quite to leave out the ‘tshernobrowaja dewitza,’ the black-eyed maiden, for whom the captive longs”



In Two Volumes, post 8vo.

THE MORNING LAND;

OR,

A THOUSAND AND ONE DAYS IN THE EAST.

BY FREDERICK BODENSTEDT.

WITH NOTES, ETC.,

BY RICHARD WADDINGTON.

First Series.

"A kind of 'romance of Eastern Travel,' instead of a literal record of its scenes and adventures, it consists of notes of his travels in the region of the Black and Caspian Seas, and sketches of native and foreign life in places where he resided for some time,—as at Tiflis or Erivan; enlivened with portraits characteristic of the soil or of its conquerors. Dr. Bodenstedt now and then notes a sharp trait of the Russian fashions in Georgia. Before parting with him, we would fain have borrowed his sketch of the motley company seen at a Tiflis winter ball,—which is among the best that he has drawn. But this, and others marked for particular notice, the reader must be left to seek for himself:—and the search will not be devoid of amusement."—*Athenæum*.

"Dr. Bodenstedt's travels took him, not to the hackneyed shores of the Mediterranean and Red Sea—but to the comparatively unknown territories of Southern Russia and Georgia, whither it has been a genuine pleasure to accompany him. Starting from Moscow, he traversed the southern provinces of Russia, crossed the 'frosty Caucasus' to the sunny gardens of Tiflis, the capital of Georgia, and

thence made excursions into the neighbouring country of Armenia. Of these regions these volumes give us an animated account. They have the merit of differing entirely from books of travel in general, and are a genuine, unadorned picture of remarkable occurrences. Space will not allow us to follow Dr. Bodenstedt, through all his wanderings ; we can only urge our readers to turn to the book itself, and to become acquainted, through its pages, with the infinite diversities presented in the lives of these children of the mountains. It is a book of solid information and sensible reflections, a book which brings distant countries to our English firesides, and enables us to survey from our arm-chairs the singular panorama of eastern life. Those who are satiated with the empty egotism of travels in general, will be pleased to meet a traveller who is worthy of the name,—one who observes with acuteness, selects with judgment, and describes with skill.”—*Literary Gazette*.